The Socialists Clean

new Masses

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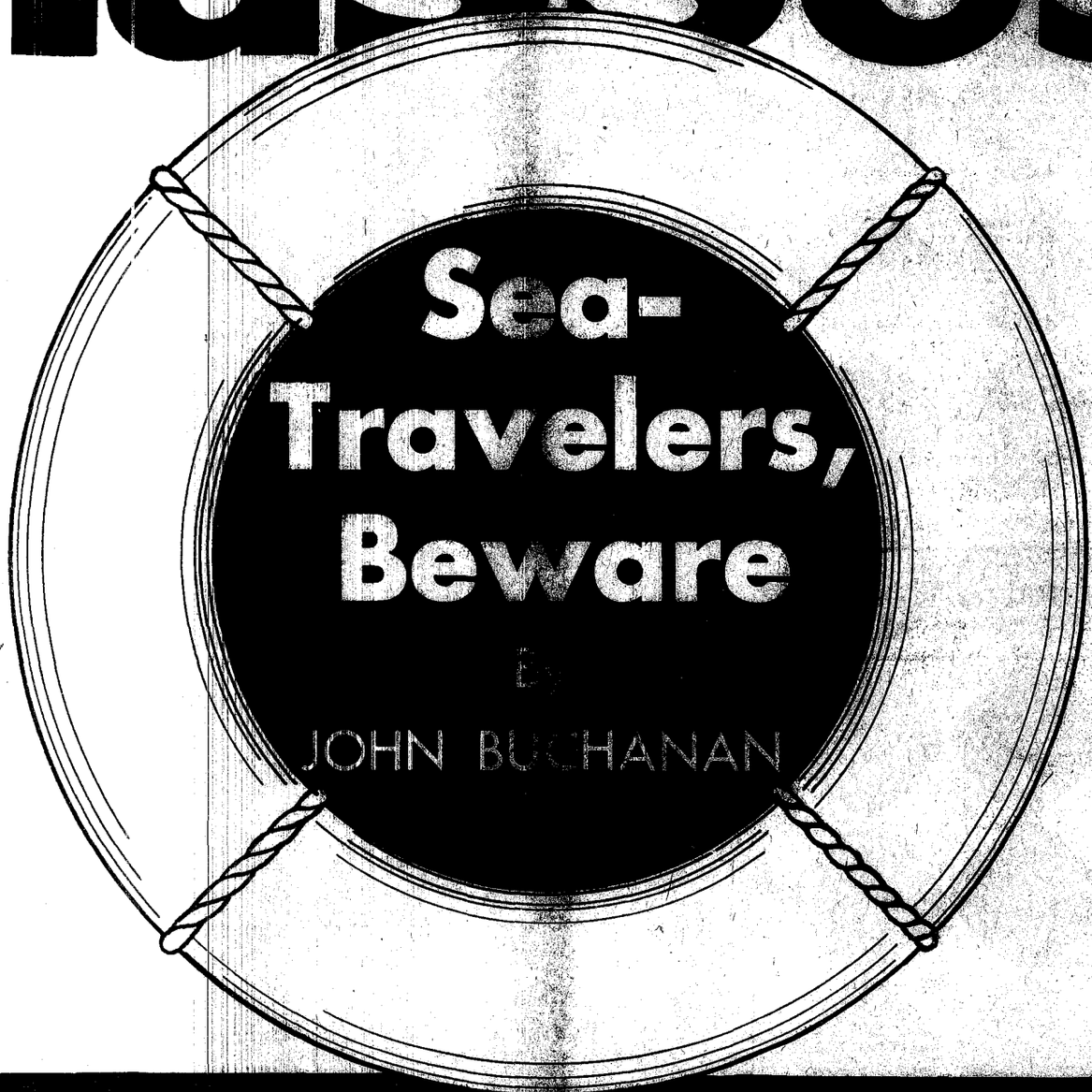

Sea-Travelers, Beware

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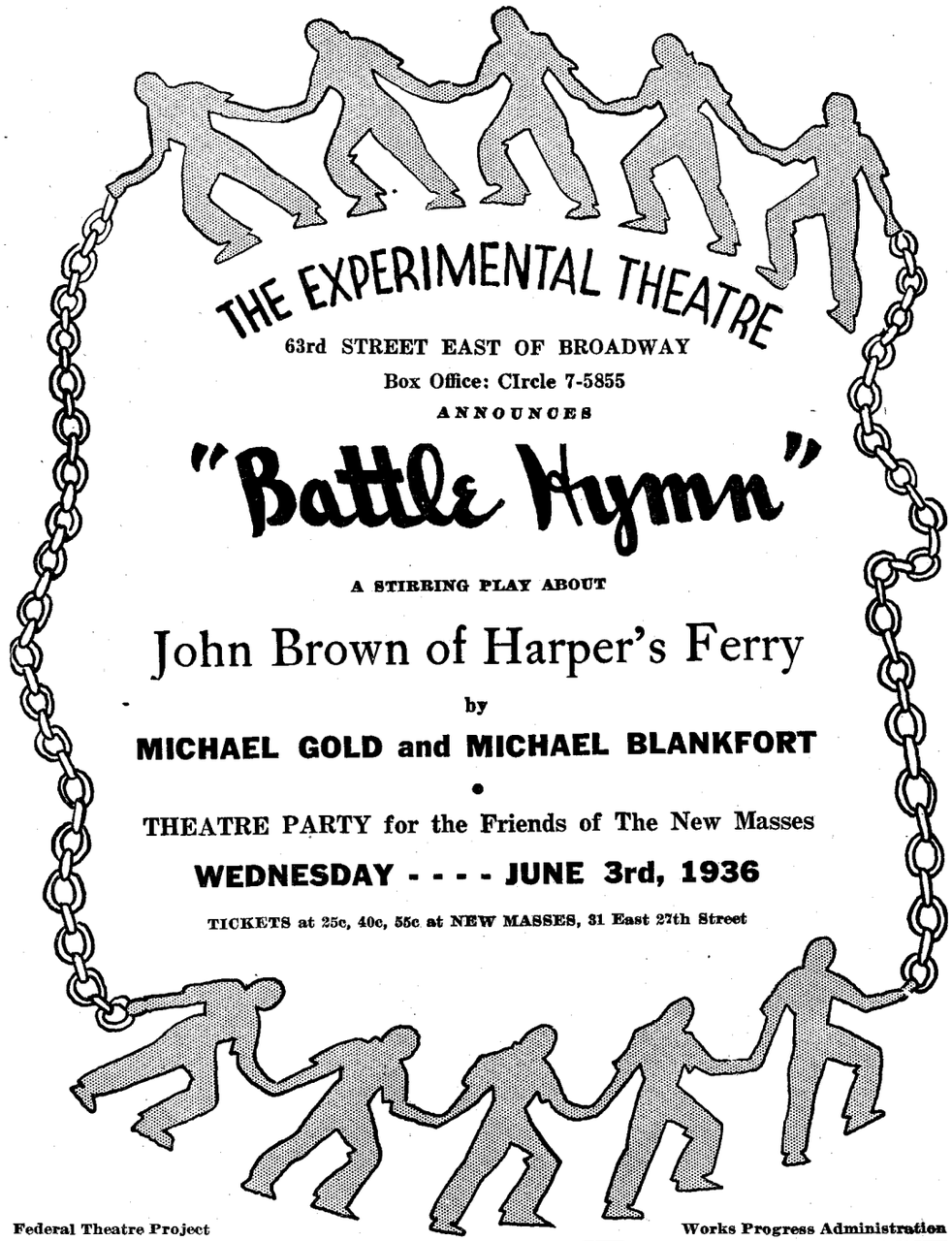

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New Masses

JUNE 2, 1936

A Family Affair

SPEAKING to a gathering of Jews, Secretary Ickes relayed this message from President Roosevelt:

> So long as minorities of the nations of the world are deprived of liberty of thought and religion and the right to lead a moral, civilized life, there can be no true and permanent understanding between nations. . . . [the President] will ever give watchful care to the minorities within its border and will maintain inviolate those vital rights that are guaranteed by the Constitution to the most humble of its citizens.

By that, the President recognized the existence of humble, more humble and most humble citizens and, by inference, proud, prouder and proudest citizens. Some of the proud ones, Democratic congressmen, called to a caucus to consider anti-lynching bills before the House, could not muster a quorum and anti-lynching action is thereby pronounced dead this session. Presumably the ever-watchful President has some influence with Democratic congressmen, but no presidential message was sent. During the same week Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt invited girls from a District of Columbia lockup for women. It was a gesture to which there had been preliminaries in Mrs. Roosevelt's syndicated news column. The white girls dressed in white muslin were received first. The Negro girls in print dresses furnished for the occasion by W.P.A. came behind. When refreshments were served the white girls were seated under one marquee, the Negro girls under another. It is presumed that President Roosevelt has some influence also with Mrs. Roosevelt. The ever-watchful President was missing, but Jim Crow was there.

TAKING A WALK — *Russell T. Limbach*

The Communists Campaign

EARL BROWDER, general secretary of the Communist Party, opened the Communist election campaign in Madison Square Garden before a crowd of fifteen thousand people. In the first half of his address, Browder reviewed the world war situation; in the second, he outlined the Communist position in the coming election. He pointed out that both the huge war budget of the Roosevelt administration and the plea of isolationists to "keep America out of war" by retiring into a "self-sufficient" nationalism, are actually playing into the hands of those who have most to benefit from war.

In stating the Communist plans for the coming election campaign, Browder called for a united front, for a Socialist-Communist presidential candidate to oppose the two capitalist parties. Even though such a proposal has been tabled by the Socialist Party leaders at their convention on May 25, the Communists will continue in their efforts for Socialist-Communist unity. If the united ticket is not realized, the Communist Party will run its own presidential candidate. Browder stressed that "the main enemy of the people of America today is the Republican-Liberty-League-Hearst combination." Contrary to misrepresentation in the bourgeois press, this realization in no way implies what newspapers have ballyhoed as "Communist endorsement of Roosevelt." Browder emphasized:

> We do not cancel a word of our criticism of Roosevelt. We do not take any responsibility for him. . . . But that does not mean that we will break off united front relations with those masses because they go with Roosevelt. . . . We have

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much in common, especially with those trade unions who are going with Roosevelt.

Above all, the Communist Party calls even more strongly than before for a Farmer-Labor Party on a local, state and national scale—though in the present elections plans have been abandoned for a presidential ticket. To the unions, the Communists urge the election of Farmer-Labor congressmen, senators, governors, mayors, local officials. As Browder put it,

> Don't you see that you must at least organize your own forces to the left of Roosevelt, as the Liberty League organizes its forces on the right, creating pressure, making demands, acting not as an auxiliary, but as an independent force?

The endorsement of Roosevelt by many trade-union leaders has created a situation in which clear vision is essential if progressive people are to use their ballots in behalf of their own interests. Whatever happens at the polls, whether Roosevelt or one of the arch-reactionaries comes into office, liberty-loving people can take effective action by exerting pressure upon the new administration. Most effective of all would be the solid support of the Socialist-Communist presidential candidate in conjunction with a widespread endorsement of Farmer-Labor Party tickets for congressional, state and local offices. Even those people who still have faith in Roosevelt and look to him for the preservation of democratic rights and the enactment of social legislation must never fail to realize Roosevelt's susceptibility to pressure. A strong Farmer-Labor bloc in Congress would be a positive force against the counter pressure of the reaction.

Mussolini's Metaphor

"MARCH straight ahead," Mussolini exhorted the war legions of Italian Fascism on May 24. From the Palazzo di Venezia he shouted:

> Have we marched straight ahead up to this time? . . . I declare to you we will march just as straight ahead in the future!

Can this be dismissed as another idle fascist metaphor? Five hundred thousand Italian soldiers in Ethiopia are now conveniently near Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, British Somaliland, Kenya and Egypt. Egypt itself is flanked on the east by 50,000 soldiers in Libya under Italo Balbo's command. Doubtless the Fascist war council is planning a renewed advance, this time directed at British possessions in North Africa in an attempt to wrest from Britain control of the Mediterranean.

The collapse of effective international action in defense of Ethiopia won a major victory for the warlike powers over the forces of peace. The fruit of Italian aggression in Ethiopia may now be witnessed in the unprecedented universal heightening of war tension. Nazi and Japanese war-makers are even more arrogant than usual.

An immediate outgrowth of the Italo-British conflict appeared last week when the Baldwin cabinet announced its colossal armament program. Yet strangely enough there are still those who in the name of peace preservation would allow aggressive nations a free hand in revising existing boundaries through military force. Only the active cooperation of labor and peace organizations in all countries and the concerted action of all governments desiring peace can prevent Italian Fascism, Hitler and the Japanese imperialists from marching straight ahead into a second world war.

France's 600,000

AN exceptionally impressive demonstration took place Sunday, May 24, before the cemetery wall of Père Lachaise. It commemorated the bloody week of May, 1871, when the heroes of the Commune made their courageous last stand against overwhelming odds. More than 600,000 workers, women, war veterans, intellectuals, and youth marched past the wall for nine hours in honor of the martyrs who died in freedom's cause. They acclaimed the recent election victory of the People's Front.

As a symbol of proletarian solidarity, the Socialists carried banners on which the emblems of the Second and Third Internationals interlaced, topped by the word "Unite!" The marchers enthusiastically cheered Léon Blum, who stood between Marcel Cachin and Maurice Thorez. "To work, Blum!" they exclaimed. "Courage! Energy! We are behind you."

Indeed, everything indicates that a good deal of Blum's present cautiousness is merely temporary prudence. Once inaugurated into office, the driving vigilance of the People's Front will do much to force Blum to attack boldly the immediate problems before the country, particularly the public-works program for absorbing the unemployed. Besides this, to fulfill the program of the People's Front, Blum must act on the forty-hour week, collective contracts, the abolition of decree laws, compulsory education, the purging of government departments of fascists and reactionaries, and the control of credit.

The most heartening phenomenon is that all People's Front parties and their organizations are determined that the Blum government, in carrying out this program, shall have the stability that comes from full cooperation and support. Last Friday, May 21, the executive committee of the Radical-Socialists voted unanimously, with but one exception, to support the People's Front government whenever called upon for a vote of confidence.

Impartial Doublecross

THE descent to hell is easy, said the Roman bard. Corruption leads to corruption, and now Mr. J. H. Thomas, after a long career of double-crossing the class interests of Britain's workers, has been caught double-crossing the British Cabinet.

Thomas sat in Parliament for years as a representative of the Labor Party. More recently he held the post of Secretary for Dominions in Baldwin's tory government. The cabinet took every precaution to keep secret the tax increase agreed upon April 22 (a tax for armament purposes). Nevertheless Lloyd's was swamped with customers who rushed in to buy insurance against a tax rise.

An official inquiry disclosed the fact that Leslie Thomas, stockbroker son of the Cabinet Minister, had taken out several thousand pounds of tax insurance for Alfred Bates, an advertising man. Bates had bought the elder Thomas a $76,000 house, accepting as "security" the rights of Thomas' autobiography which the Secretary for Dominions had not yet written. The whole episode adds a striking chapter to the history of corrupt trade-union bureaucracy.

Readers in the Park

NEW YORK'S big midtown public library on Fifth Avenue has an area behind it which used to look like

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a vacant lot but which W.P.A. labor has turned into one of the most pleasant small parks in the city. It is frequented by the unemployed and at noon by workers from the surrounding big office buildings. The library tried the experiment last year of supplying reading facilities in the park. It was so successful that the opening this year has been advanced to May 18.

What is read in this outdoor library? Books and magazines of all sorts, of course, but the article in The Bulletin of the New York Public Library, summarizing last year's experiences, contains some unusually interesting sidelights.

> The man in the park is definitely interested in what is happening in the world. Current numbers of The Review of Reviews, The New Republic, The Literary Digest, and THE NEW MASSES, given by the publishers, were in constant circulation and heated discussions by readers with different political points of view were not infrequent. . . . No book by Karl Marx and no book, pamphlet or magazine influenced by his teaching ever stayed on the shelf.

THE NEW MASSES is renewing its gift subscription to the outdoor library. Readers of THE NEW MASSES who have proletarian books or pamphlets to spare could put them in good use by contributing them to this service of the library.

Champion of Youth

WHEN last a generation of youth received general attention it was in the hectic boom period—it was the era of "flaming youth." Sons and daughters of the realty and stock-market boomsters who could afford the fuel—alcohol, cars, road houses, etc.—did their best to flame and earn the title. Nineteen hundred and twenty-nine was an effective extinguisher. The old fires are out but a new fire, to which all sections of youth are kindling, has been lit. It is the fire of protest of an aroused youth that has been lied to in the schools and left in a vacuum after school, and that sees before it only the C.C.C. roads to the battlefield. There has just appeared the first issue of a monthly magazine, The Champion of Youth, which articulates, as no magazine has done before, all the interests of youth today, its protests, its challenges, its aspirations for a new society and its vigorous love of life. Its contributors are distinguished; they include Professor Edward Allsworth Ross, Granville Hicks, James J. Wechsler, Governor Floyd B. Olson, Harold Ward, Edward Strong, Jack Conroy, Grace Lumpkin, Jessica Smith, Angelo Herndon, the labor leader John L. Lewis and others. Certainly as interesting as this galaxy of contributors is the range of interest, vigor and realism shown in the editorials and other regular departments of the magazine. With its very first issue the magazine fulfils its name; it is a bold and well-poised champion.

Sailors, Beware!

THE U. S. Government's delegation to the conference of the International Labor Office opening this June in Geneva, sailed from New York on May 20. It included John G. Winant, chairman of the Social Security Board; Frieda S. Miller, of the New York State Department of Labor; J. C. Lewis, president of the Iowa Federation of Labor; and Emil Rieve, president of the American Federation of Hosiery Workers.

They sailed on the scab S.S. Manhattan, which was being picketed by the striking seamen while the delegation boarded the liner.

Supreme Court Straddle

THE Supreme Court delayed its decision on the Guffey Bill for a longer time than it delayed any other decision in its history. But it is significant that immediately after an agreement was signed between coal operators and union representatives, the Court gave its decision. It is no coincidence that the decision was not handed down while negotiations were in progress: it might have precipitated a nationwide strike in America's largest basic industry. The Supreme Court, supposedly "impartial," kept its record clean by once again killing socially-constructive legislation.

All nine judges agreed on one point with the majority decision. Though an article mined or manufactured in one state might be intended for sale or actually transported to another state, the Court found that this fact does not constitute interstate commerce. Congress therefore has no power to regulate labor conditions but must leave such matters to the individual states. And on this basis, the labor provisions of the Guffey Bill were declared invalid.

Even the so-called "liberals" of the Court had no kind words for those sections of the Guffey Bill dealing with wages and organization of labor. Justice Cardozo, in whose opinion Justices Brandeis and Stone concurred, stated with reference to those sections dealing with labor:

> Any declaration in respect of their validity or invalidity under the commerce

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clause of the Constitution or under any other section will anticipate a controversy that may never become real. This being so, the proper course is to withhold an expression of opinion until expression becomes necessary.

In other words, the "liberals" refused to defend the labor clauses. They sidestepped any direct commitment but intimated clearly enough that if the labor sections were considered, they too would find them "unconstitutional." The stage is set for throwing out the Wagner Labor Relations Act—which also offers some basis for labor organization, even though inadequate and faulty.

Senator Guffey has introduced a "new" bill in Congress—the same Guffey Bill as that found unconstitutional, except that the labor provisions are omitted. The price-fixing provisions remain, those sections that give monopoly control over the industry to large coal companies and that end price cutting. The Guffey Bill is acceptable to the large corporations—*without the labor provisions*.

Where does President Roosevelt stand? He has refused to comment. He has made no move, direct or indirect, against the Supreme Court, has refused to make the fight against the usurped powers of the Court part of his reelection campaign. He retreats once again before the Liberty League, the du Ponts, the Hearsts—just those who utilize the Supreme Court as their most powerful weapon.

The result of the decision? Already, because of it, the National Labor Relations Board has refused to entertain a complaint against R. H. Macy and Co. —engaged in interstate commerce— which has dismissed ten union leaders for the crime of union affiliation. Macy's hired a stoolpigeon to inform on the union members. The Supreme Court provided the "legality" of wholesale dismissals. It is an excellent institution, the Supreme Court, highly valued by the reactionary forces in America.

America's Newspaper Guild

BORN as something of an N.R.A. baby, the American Newspaper Guild will display a maturity belying its age in respect to organizational existence when it applies for citizenship in the realm of organized labor at its annual convention in New York City this weekend. Affiliation to the American Federation of Labor without doubt will be the chief question before that extremely significant gathering of newspaper men and women. That the convention will apply for membership in the A. F. of L. as an international union is a foregone conclusion. Last year's referendum already foreshadowed such action. If 1935 produced a 65-plus percentage in favor of affiliation, the tactics of William Randolph Hearst in Milwaukee have brought the pro-A.F. of L. figure up very considerably.

Years of depression, mergers of what were once independent newspapers, ruthless discharges and pay cuts have all but destroyed the Richard Harding Davis tradition in the business. Not even the journalism-school lads are romantics these days. Few, if any, voices will rise in the convention to argue seriously that reporters and rewrite men should not be union men along with machinists and stonemasons.

Affiliation to the A. F. of L. by the country's newspapermen should be hailed on more than one count. That it will strengthen the Guild and give it the benefit of organized labor's strength and moral and material resources goes without saying. Conversely, affiliation of the Guild will also strengthen the A. F. of L. Recognition of the strategic importance of the nation's newsgatherers and the potentialities of their integration with the main body of the American labor movement has given recent remarks of reactionary publishers a peculiarly desperate tone.

Within the ranks of organized labor it may be expected that the Guild will support—in line with its declared policy—the progressive forces of industrial unionism. Men who have picketed in sub-zero weather while printers and pressmen punched time clocks under separate contracts cannot easily be sold on the virtues of craft unionism.

Differences will undoubtedly arise in the convention, as they do in any healthy labor organization. Divisions of opinion as to structure, independent political action, on the degree to which the Guild should concern itself with matters not classified as pure-and-simple trade unionism will manifest themselves. That they may be settled with a minimum of friction is the hope of all friends of the Newspaper Guild.

Significant as is the Guild convention to American labor generally, it is a cause for special rejoicing on the part of THE NEW MASSES. We who have dedicated ourselves to the special task of organizing that vast section of the American population loosely described as the middle classes feel our trust vindicated a thousand-fold in the very existence of the Guild. It has long been the custom to point deprecatingly at the man in the white collar. He was too much of an individualist to organize collectively. But, lo and behold, the traditionally unorganizable wild men of the city room actually organized! Hollywood's creation—the perennially half-soused star reporter who, single-handed, solves murder mysteries, dashes into the news room, spits in the managing editor's eye, stops the presses and hammers out The Story of The Year—has gone to the eternal bowwows. In his stead has come the sane white-collar citizen anxious to take his place in the community of all who work for a living. From this point of view, the Guild convention takes on special meaning to the millions of white-collar and professional people of the country. Guild members have pioneered boldly for the middle class of the country, to whom, in a great sense, they are the natural vanguard. They have given the labor movement allies and the professionals leaders.

Mention of the Guild convention would be incomplete without noting the heavy debt newspapermen and white-collar people of the country owe Heywood Broun, president of the American Newspaper Guild. His was something of a public responsibility; he accepted it gladly and executed his work competently. More power to him and his associates in carrying on their splendid work!

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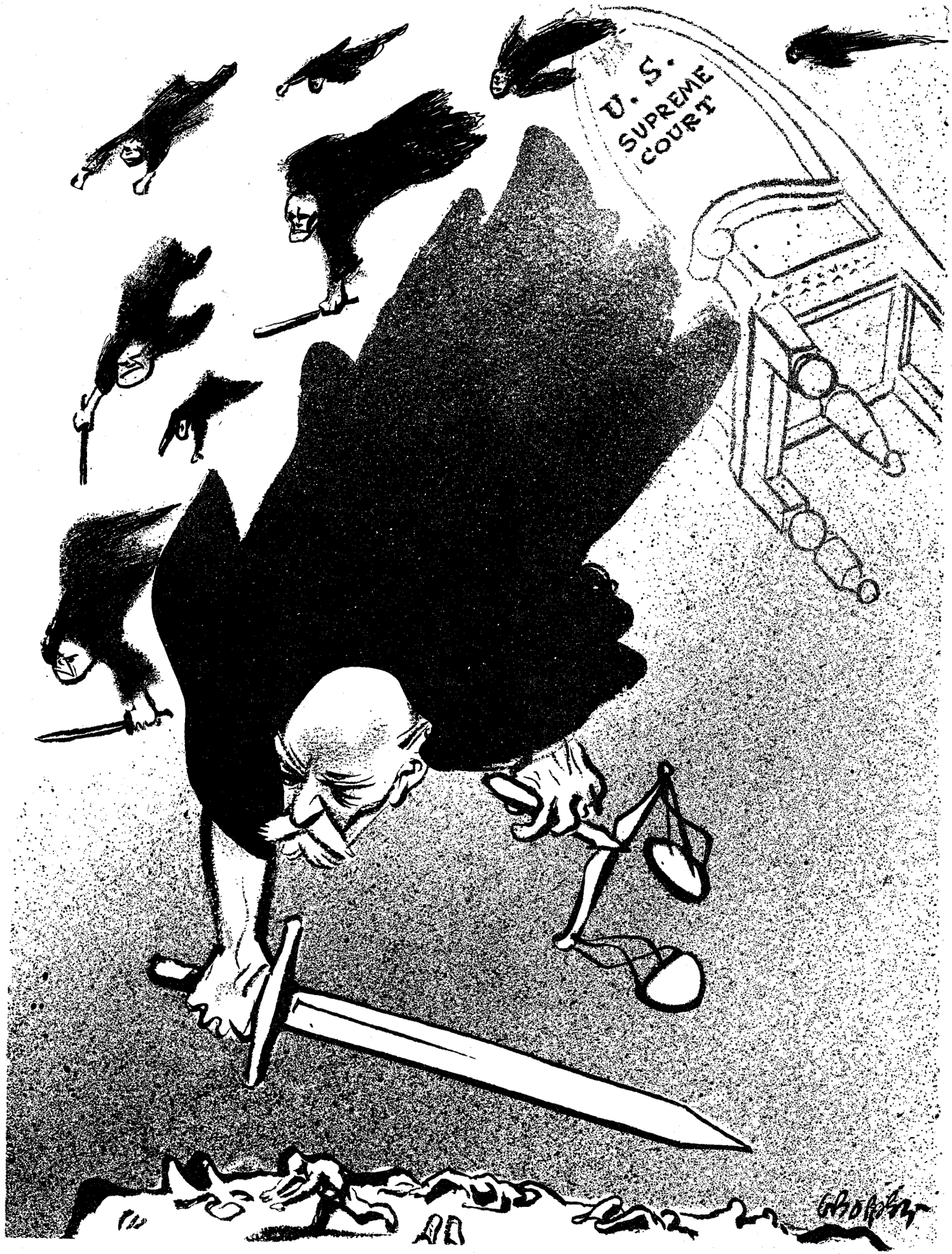

BLACK GOWNS OVER AMERICA

William Gropper

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Socialists Clean House

JOSEPH FREEMAN

CLEVELAND.

THE crude portraits, huge on the walls of the auditorium, symbolized conflicting trends within the Socialist Party which opened its Nineteenth Annual Convention here Saturday. On one side, Karl Marx—Victor Berger: on the other, Eugene Debs—Morris Hillquit.

There was tension in the crowded hall as delegates and visitors rose singing "The International" with arms stretched high. The Old Guard journalist, white-haired and yellow-skinned, sitting beside me at the press table, said bitterly: "I don't like it when they put out their hands like fascists. Even if they do clench their fists." He voiced the typical Old-Guard complaint: "The militants are Communists and Communists are not much better than fascists." The old man cast an unhappy glance over the tense crowd, glared at the Yipsels, boys and girls in blue denim shirts, red ties and kerchiefs, who ushered in aisles, rushed to and from the platform with messages.

On the stage, lips moving imperceptibly to the proletarian anthem, stood young Clarence Senior, Party Secretary, slim, with glasses and mustache; stocky, red-faced Leo Krzycki, Party Chairman; lanky Dan Hoan, Milwaukee's famous mayor.

In the violent artificial light which floods the three long press tables stretching before the stage and across the width of the hall, you can see the importance which the press and other Parties attach to this Convention. Every paper is represented, every radical group. Blond, heavy-jowled, still young Jay Lovestone, much plumper than in the days before he was expelled from the Communist Party, stands grinning, chewing gum beside the sallow-faced, spectacled Times reporter, Joe Shaplen alias John Powers of the Old-Guard New Leader. Further down is Max Schachtman, observing for the Trotskyites, who plan to enter the Socialist Party which they hope to control. There is lean-faced, grey-haired Julius Gerber whom John Reed threatened to punch in the jaw in the famous 1919 split of the Socialist Party, out of which grew the American Communist movement. Somewhere in the center, immobile Jack Stachel, observing for the Communist Party. At the far end of the press-table stand, sensitive, detached J. B. S. Hardman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, holding their own Convention in Cleveland this time. From these men a Proust could almost reconstruct the history of the Socialist and Communist movements in America in the past fifteen years.

The struggle between the Militants and the Old Guard goes back openly to 1924, when the younger elements resented the Party's abnegation of independent political action and support of LaFollette for President. If I can believe the young Militant who kept me up till dawn Sunday relating the history of the fight, the new blood which came into the Party after the War was profoundly influenced by the Bolshevik Revolution. They felt the old men in control were passive, lethargic, reformist; doing nothing to advance the Party theoretically, organizationally or politically. Young people found themselves at a disadvantage arguing with the Communists. They were against Communism, for a more left Socialist Party. In their efforts to develop their Party leftwards, they encountered the stone wall of bureaucracy and conservatism. Some old Party leaders had found comfortable niches in the bourgeois world as lawyers; others drew big salaries from trade unions; still others were highly-paid members of the luxurious machine created by The Jewish Daily Forward, the biggest and richest Yiddish paper in the world; some were either themselves corrupt or condoned the corruption in others.

At first the conflict between young and old was unclearly formulated. Then it became obvious that it was not a matter of age but of program. The Old Guard, then headed by Morris Hillquit, were confronted by the Militants who chose Norman Thomas as standard-bearer. The narrowly-practical politicians, bent upon a reformist party and bound by vested interests in the party machinery and even in the bourgeois world, faced those unwilling to be isolated from the main stream of the radicalized American working class who wanted to organize workers on a left-wing Socialist program.

The Old Guard, it soon became evident, wanted to keep the party reformist, Social-Democratic; the Militants wanted policies analogous to those of the Independent Labor Party in England.

The crisis in the world intensified the crisis in the Socialist Party. Hunger, unemployment, suppression of civil liberties, the open-shop drive, demanded of every party which spoke in the name of the working class a definite answer on the burning issues of the day. Hitler's assumption to power in Germany and the spread of fascist doctrines in the United States, the preparations for war both here and abroad, the aggressive military actions of Germany, Italy and Japan compelled every progressive party to clarify its position.

Within the Socialist Party, that clarification was impossible so long as two irreconcilable viewpoints existed. At the Detroit Convention of the Socialist Party in 1934, the factional struggle came to a head. Militants proposed a declaration of principles:

(1) The Socialist Party will refuse collectively to sanction or support any international war; it will seek to break up war by massed war resistance; so far as this is practical through general strike of labor unions and professional groups, it will seek to convert the war crisis into a victory for Socialism.

(2) The Socialist Party seeks to attain its objectives by peaceful, orderly means; but it will fight fascism by relying on the organization of the disciplined labor movement, by carrying the revolutionary struggle into the enemy camp.

(3) The Socialist Party seeks to replace bogus democracy. If capitalism can be superseded by a majority vote, the Socialist Party will rejoice. If the crisis comes through a denial of majority rights after the electorate has given us its mandate, we shall not hesitate to crush by our labor solidarity the reckless forces of reaction and to consolidate the Socialist state. If the capitalist system should collapse in the general chaos and confusion which cannot permit orderly procedure, the Socialist Party, whether or not in such a case it is in the majority, will not shrink from the responsibility of organizing and maintaining the government under the rule of the producing masses.

The Old Guard, led by Louis Waldman, twice the Party's candidate for Governor, denounced this program as "anarchist and Bolshevik." They wanted to fight it out on this point without amendment or compromise of any kind. This was a deliberate maneuver by the Old Guard to compel the Left to leave its hasty and unconsidered phrases, to remain unchanged by any discussion or amendment from the floor. They had their way; there were no amendments or compromises permitted; and declarations of principles adopted, the Militants had won a majority in the Party.

The fight was carried on relentlessly within the New York State party organization, where the Forward group was strongest. The Old Guard denounced the tendency of Militants to form united fronts with Communists on specific issues, such as the Herndon case, May Day parades, etc., and denounced the invitation which the Militants extended to "unattached radicals" to join the Party. If you let in Trotskyites, the Old Guard argued, you will convert our Party into a "Bolshevik-Leninist" Party.

The Old-Guard press closed its columns to full, open discussion of basic principles and The New Leader, subsidized by The Forward, carried on unprincipled attacks against Norman Thomas and the Militants. Thomas founded The Socialist Call which attained a circulation of sixteen thousand in three weeks, indicating the desire of the rank and file to maintain contact with the masses and issues. The Old Guard leadership of New York compelled the State Executive Committtee and the New York Central Committee, then under their control, to move for the expulsion of anyone con-

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nected with The Socialist Call, which meant Thomas and all the Militants. Thereupon the Militants left the Central Committee and formed a provisional New York local to prepare a protest to the National Executive Committee, since the Old Guard State Executive refused arbitrarily to review any appeal on this decision.

The N.E.C. extended numerous invitations to the Old Guard to appear before it and justify its actions. The Old Guard refused to appear. The N.E.C. appointed an investigating committee which met in New York and Philadelphia and after a thorough examination suspended the charter of the Old Guard New York local and appointed a provisional state committee. This body consisted of twelve Old Guards, twelve Militants and three Centrists. The Old Guard refused to serve. The state conference in Utica, November, 1935, to which all groups were invited, the Old Guard refused to attend. The Militants carried on from Utica until the N.E.C. finally revoked the charter of the Old Guard.

In the spring of this year the Old Guard, violating Socialist principles, entered the capitalist primaries for the purpose of settling the inner party dispute.

They were led by Waldman and Matthew Levy and the partner of the renegade Socialist, the LaGuardia appointee Judge Panken. The purpose was to prevent rank-and-file Socialists from nominating their candidates in the primaries. This created bitter feeling in the Party. But in spite of enormous funds at the disposal of the Old Guard contributed by The Forward, the Old Guard was beaten decisively by the Militants in the primaries—worse still, after filing candidates of the Socialist Party at the expense of three thousand dollars for legal fees again supplied by The Forward. But the young, sleepless Militant lawyers, receiving no pay at all, beat every one of these injunctions against the battery of experienced Old Guard lawyers. The injunctions were thrown out of court.

Defeated in the courts, the Waldman groups ordered workers, office employes and other impoverished members of the State Committee to attend at their own expense the convention in Buffalo: 450 miles from where the majority lived. They wanted, at best, to obtain control; at worst, further to exhaust the meager funds of the Militants. But the Buffalo convention of 1936 spelled definite defeat for the Old Guard group. It ended the legal status of the Waldman clique as bosses of the Old Guard.

When the convention opened in Cleveland last Saturday, the Old Guard were technically no longer members of the Party, but they wanted to be the central issue of the convention. Led by Waldman, they came to Cleveland with the demand to be seated as regular delegates in place of the forty-four delegates headed by Norman Thomas and elected by the state organization and recognized by the National Executive Committee of the Party. This was to be the central issue of the convention—for it involved fundamental questions both of organization and policy. This is what every delegate had in mind as he stood singing "The International."

There were three keynote speeches: by Leo Krzycki, party chairman; Mayor Hoan of Milwaukee; and by Norman Thomas, leader of the Militants. All three agreed on the need for socialism; all evaded the most immediate issues confronting the American people at this moment; on these issues which they mentioned they did not agree, though they were united in the struggle against the Old Guard. Leo Krzycki was for a Farmer-Labor Party; Dan Hoan against a Farmer-Labor Party except on a local scale and even then with strong reservations. Norman Thomas was for socialism and against Roosevelt. None of the keynoters made a sharp attack on the Republican-Hearst-Liberty-League crowd, the most reactionary and dangerous of capitalist groups.

WITH the preliminaries over, the delegates got down to battle. The Militant-controlled credentials committee gave the Old Guard everything except the New York delegation. It recommended seating of the group headed by Norman Thomas. If this were done, the Militants would have complete control of the party. No one had appeared before the credentials committee to contest the seats of the Thomas delegation.

On the first contested delegations, New York and New Jersey were excluded from voting, yet the Militants won these seats by a large majority, thanks to the support of Dan Hoan's Wisconsin delegation. The vote —115 for the Militants, 55 for the Old Guards—showed that the country as well as New York wanted a real program for the Socialist Party.

By Saturday night, tense delegates got down to the main issues.. James Oneal, Old Guard member of the National Executive Committee, moved to seat the Waldman group in the convention and proposed to read a minority report on credentials. At this moment Old Guard contestants from New York dramatically entered the auditorium. The burly sergeant-at-arms in blue shirtsleeves stopped them at the brass barrier separating delegates from visitors. Voices clamored from every part of the hall: "Let them in! No, they are not entitled to be here. They are not party members. Hell, they are our leaders. You kicked them out illegally."

Louis Waldman, slick, tanned, well-dressed, black hair carefully parted and glistening, stood at the head of his group, pale and grinning. He has convinced himself he has inherited Hillquit's place, but there is nothing in that hard, cunning face to suggest either the intellect or character of America's greatest reformist. Behind him are August Claessens, great soap-boxer whom all of us had heard as boys; and the gnarled face of William Carlin, and forty others of the Old Guard.

The Old Guard delegates leaped up, booming all at once, offering their seats to their fallen leaders. A Maryland delegate, by profession agent of The Forward, cried out with tense feeling: "I give my seat to August Claessens." Another Old Guard delegate, Bearek of Massachusetts, demanded that he be appointed on the committee to find seats for the bitter invaders.

Norman Thomas rose suavely and saved the situation. He proposed that the Waldman group be seated on the platform, where there stood a number of empty chairs. It was a beau geste which cut as deep as a knife. The New York Old Guard shuffled uncomfortably to the stage, sheepishly faced the convention like criminals in an English dock; Waldman, most cunning of the lot, took care that the chairman and speakers should screen him from the delegates.

This scene dramatized the situation in the Socialist Party. The former bosses of the party, those who stubbornly refused to heed the radicalized mood of the American masses, who carried on Red-baiting campaigns after the manner of Hearst, who bitterly resisted the movement toward unity and revolutionary action, now sat as strangers in the party they had once controlled. The Old Guard, however, dies without surrendering. The Waldman group knew it was defeated, but it was determined to make as much noise as possible before its severance with the Socialist Party became complete.

James Oneal, elderly editor of The New Leader, placed an organizational issue before the convention. He moved to seat the Waldman group and read a long report to delegates to justify his proposal. It was so long that the convention sat up to 2 A. M. to hear it and to debate it. In high, husky voice, Oneal accused the Militants of preaching armed insurrection, of filling the Socialist Party with Communists; he accused the National Executive Committee of usurping power, of violating states' rights within the party; he railed, in typical Hearst-Howard manner, against "the Red menace" within the Socialist Party and wound up with a proposal which amounted to handing the party over to the Old Guard.

He was followed by Louis Waldman, who took an hour to state his position. Rhetoric poured out of him in an *apologia pro sua vita*. He had given his life to the Socialist Party; he had served trade unions as a lawyer.

"How much do you get for it?" shouted a well-known socialist poet, Sam Dewitt, who was Waldman's colleague in the famous New York assembly ouster.

Vanity betrayed the Old Guard leader. "Whatever I get," he shouted back, "it is fully deserved."

These were minor melodramatics. On important points, Waldman was unyielding.

"We do not come to beg you to seat us in this convention," he said bitterly, twitching his mouth, "we come to *demand* our right to be seated in the party from which you have

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illegally excluded us. We do not want any compromises; we are either right or not. This is a conflict basic in character to the kind of socialist movement we shall have in the United States."

THAT was precisely the conflict. All talk of "illegal" action by the National Executive Committee, of usurpation of power, of "Communists," was a corollary to the main issue:

Shall the Socialist Party be in the hands of the Old Guard or the Militants? Shall it be a reformist social-democratic party furnishing judges to LaGuardia, supporters to Roosevelt, bureaucrats to the labor movement, denunciations of progressives to the capitalist press, a reactionary program to the aroused workers, farmers and middle classes? Or shall it respond to the demand of the people for action against capitalism, fascism and war?

Militants have their own limitations, but they at least are willing to seek a path toward some kind of revolutionary action; the Old Guard wanted stagnation, decay, reformism. This was the issue which Waldman stated and delegates heard it through his histrionic self-pity, self-justification and through his melodramatic abuse of and challenges to the Left.

Norman Thomas, replying for an hour, took up the challenge. He accused the Old Guard of seceding from the party; of denouncing party members to the capitalist press; of suing the party in capitalist courts; of demanding all or nothing; of planning a new Social-Democratic Party.

He spoke in a low voice, with refreshing restraint, but his differences with the Old Guard were unmistakable. You can, he told the Waldman group, found a new party which will give you the satisfaction of spite; you can found a pious party in which Socialists may get together at prayer meetings and pay devotion—though not too much of it—to Marxism; or you may become definite allies of Roosevelt or of a labor group supporting Roosevelt. Thomas was referring to the Dubinsky-Lewis groups openly supporting Roosevelt in the election campaign. He urged, in contrast, a Socialist Party that would educate the people in socialism and trade unionism; that would help organize the unemployed. He said he wanted an inclusive party. It would invite men and women who had been Communists to join, but it must be a Socialist Party. He had in mind the Trotskyites who are going to give up their own party and join the Socialist Party in order to control it. Thomas, of course, thinks he will control them.

If there still is any doubt that the Old Guard had come not to negotiate but to abuse and defy as a prelude to taking a walk from the party to which they no longer technically belonged, Algernon Lee made it doubly clear. Age has not dimmed the boyish petulance of this stubborn pedant. He still has a habit of feverishly pouring water from the speaker's glass on to the floor of the platform. He still speaks from notes, crumples them, hurls them for emphasis from him until the stage is littered with them. To think that in 1901 he edited The New York Magazine devoted to proletarian literature which he later considered an importation from Moscow! Now he stands there, shouting with trembling voice: "We will make no bargains. We are not here to beg, we ask no favors, we would cut our tongues out rather than ask favors. Restore the charter to the Old Guard in New York; seat our forty-four delegates—or support the National Executive Committee and put us out."

The alternative at any rate was clear and on Sunday the convention acted on it. You have by this time read all the details in the papers and know the results. Everybody took the floor, amplifying the general cleavage of opinion. I was impressed by the fact that a union coal digger, Fisher of Union, took the platform; that only one or two Negroes were evident in the convention and only one woman spoke.

Then came the maneuvers and counter-maneuvers, accusations and counter-accusations, but the vote, taken by states, gave an overwhelming victory to the Militants. The Old Guard was decisively defeated. They demanded no compromise and got none; they had been working with all the cunning of skilled lawyers to separate themselves from the Socialist Party and by Sunday evening they were gathered in the Hotel Hollenden forming a new party—the kind of a party they had wanted the Socialist Party to be.

Again political division was dramatized. At the close of Sunday morning's session, the delegates from the Mexican Labor Federation took the platform. Alexander Carillo, tall, good looking, speaking excellent English, urged the People's Front. The delegates sang "The International." They sang, standing. Waldman and Lee remained seated.

Claiming the agreement of several other states, Waldman announced that the new party would enter the campaign in the New York state elections. But whom would it support for president? Waldman would not say. He did say whom he would not support; he would not support the Socialist candidate if Norman Thomas were nominated for president.

The Old Guard's new party will be the old party of social-democratic reformism. What will the renovated Socialist Party be like? It is difficult to predict at this point, but some factors are fairly clear. With the Old Guard completely cleaned out, the Socialist Party is definitely seeking a new political line. It is engaged in serious deliberations to formulate a program designed to meet the needs of the class struggle. At the same time, the renovated Socialist Party suffers from political infantile disorders. Trotskyites, who will enter it, will make every effort to convert it into a propaganda organ against the Soviet Union and the Communist Party. Other elements will seek to make the Socialist Party a sectarian group. This was evident when various draft programs were read at the convention. These were abstract lectures on socialism; no real policy of immediate demands has been worked out; no clear answers have yet been given on such vital issues as the united-front Farmer-Labor Party, on the practical struggle against war and fascism.

THE convention received a letter from the Communist Party soundly emphasizing that the class-conscious workers of America, the broad circles of trade unionists, the advanced elements in the Farmer-Labor movement are looking to the Socialist and Communist Parties for guidance in the present situation. They justly expect that both parties will find a way of working together in consultation and will struggle to strengthen the camp of fighters against reaction, to present a United Front in the election campaign and to further jointly the development of the Farmer-Labor movement. Furthermore, the Communists requested that at the Farmer-Labor Party conference to be held in Chicago on May 30, the Socialists and Communists should hold joint consultations on all important questions considered by the conference.

These proposals for joint action were based on the previously expressed objection of Militant leaders to a general United Front pact as well as their willingness to accept unity on specific issues. The Communist letter suggested a minimum program acceptable in the light of declarations so often made by the Militants.

But Maynard Krueger of Chicago took the floor and stated that Socialists desired socialism through the Socialist Party and not through the Communist Party. This not only misstated the question but completely ignored the specific questions raised by the letter. By abruptly moving that the Communist Party's proposals be tabled, discussion was avoided. The hasty action, the refusal to discuss the letter, indicated the anxiety of certant Militant leaders to placate Hoan of Milwaukee and other right wingers within the Militant ranks.

The Communist Party has reiterated its urgent request that the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party act favorably on proposals for furthering united action. At this writing, the convention has still to formulate its platform, the platform on which Norman Thomas will ask the American workers to vote for him for president as the nominated choice of the Socialist Party. That platform, to be realistic, must take a definite stand in supporting the Farmer-Labor Party, must lay the basis for building the unity of the American working class by joint action with the Communist Party. For the Socialists who have cleaned house by eliminating those Old Guard elements who had long ago deserted the Socialist cause, have now to face the millions who expect them to take the next imperative step toward united action in this most critical period of American history.

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Sea-Travelers, Beware!

JOHN BUCHANAN

AN elaborate campaign of ballyhoo to convince travelers of the safety in traveling on scab-manned ships was thrown out in preparation for the sailing of the S.S. California from New York on May 2. Charges that the California was to sail manned with inexperienced seamen recruited through the W.P.A., private detective agencies and irresponsible "scouts" were grandiosely pooh-poohed by officials of the International Mercantile Marine Company. The California, scene of the notorious "mutiny" episode in San Pedro a month before, was given a widely advertised "thorough inspection and overhauling" to release the company from responsibility for any accident that might occur on the forthcoming trip. The company took great pains to lay the basis for a whole series of false charges of sabotage and a first-rate Red Scare.

When the California limped back to her dock, a day or two after she had sailed, with a damaged motor, the Hearst newspapers gleefully raised the cry of sabotage. Strikers, speaking through their leader, Joe Curran, repeated their charges that the S.S. California had left port with an inexperienced crew, pointing to the presence of two one-armed men in the engine-room crew. For fear that these charges might be substantiated, the strikebreakers aboard the ship were refused shore-leave. In the meantime, the Hearst press had to swallow its disappointment. An official investigation failed to reveal any trace of sabotage and the company officials decided that the accident was simply the result of "the natural course of events."

Is it the natural course of events to take 350 passengers to sea in an unfit vessel, with a crew the majority of whom had been rushed aboard in taxis a few minutes before sailing time and ordered to cast off without being given time to familiarize themselves with the ship? Undoubtedly it is, where the first rule of shipowning interests is "maximum profit at minimum cost of operation" and where a strike of 3,500 seamen threatens to expose the true lack of safety aboard American ships!

On May 5, when strikebreakers were first permitted ashore, angry groups of strikers dotted the waterfront around Pier 61. Many of the men coming off the S.S. California were unfamiliar with New York. Many of them had never been to sea before. Several actually claimed they had not known there was a seamen's strike and one of these, Charles Washburn, got into an argument with a group of strikers. The strikers found it hard to believe his story; one quick-tempered picket threatened him. Washburn could not defend himself. He was suffering from one of his periodic attacks of blindness.

"Are you an able seaman?" someone fired at him.

"Yes," he replied.

"Let's see your A.B. ticket!"

He showed it. Among his papers, reproduced here, he also carried a life-boat ticket and a union book issued in Philadelphia last year.

"What was your job on the California?"

"Able Seaman. They had me in the crow's nest as lookout on Saturday afternoon."

The S.S. California, with 350 passengers, had left port with a lookout who was frequently and unpredictably stone blind.

"Didn't they give you a physical examination?"

"No!"

Washburn was rushed to a striker's home. He again protested that he had not known about the strike, because from the time he had been picked up in his home town to the time he was rushed aboard the S.S. California in a taxicab he had been kept in an alcoholic stupor; he had been allowed no contact with newspapers or the outside world. He revealed also that the gin they had poured down his throat had aggravated the venereal disease from which he was suffering.

I WENT to Bellevue Hospital with a sailor friend some time later to visit Washburn and to learn how he was getting along. After obtaining passes from the director of the psychiatric division, we saw the physician in charge of the case. He described Washburn's condition and the cause of his periodic blindness as *post encephalitis*.

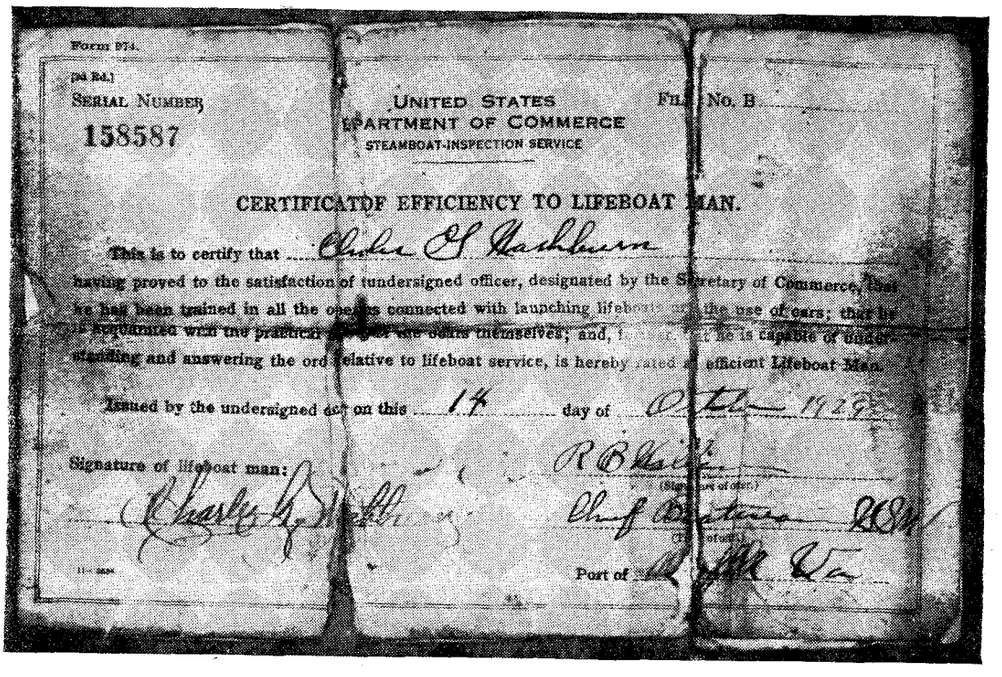
"I understand that this man was used as lookout aboard a ship," the doctor said. "I think any reliable physician would agree that he is unfit for any post of responsibility and in his present condition he's unfit for any work at all."

"But he has a ticket to prove that he's capable of managing a lifeboat!" my friend pointed out.

"I'd hate to be in that lifeboat!" the doctor remarked succinctly.

Washburn was anxious to get out of the hospital. He seemed positive he could get a job aboard another International Merchant Marine ship and hastened to add for our benefit, "as soon as the strike is over." His case-record showed that officials of the International Seamen's Union had been in touch with the hospital. By some mysterious magic the record of the circumstances under which he had come to the hospital is now missing from his chart!

That the present, corrupt and discredited officials of the International Seamen's Union are not interested in safeguarding the lives of passengers at sea is shown by the readiness with which they have turned the union offices into scab recruiting agencies to break the present East Coast strike. As for the shipowners, the Morro Castle tragedy effectively dramatized a situation that allows a profit to be made by *not* safeguarding the lives of passengers! The balance sheet of the


Form 871.

SERIAL NUMBER 158587

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
STEAMBOAT-INSPECTION SERVICE

FILE No. B

CERTIFICATE OF EFFICIENCY TO LIFEBOAT MAN.

This is to certify that Charles G. Washburn

having proved to the satisfaction of undersigned officer, designated by the Secretary of Commerce, that he has been trained in all the operations connected with launching lifeboats and the use of oars; that he is acquainted with the practical management of the boats themselves; and, that he is capable of understanding and answering the orders relative to lifeboat service, is hereby rated as efficient Lifeboat Man.

Issued by the undersigned officer on this 14 day of Oct 1929

Signature of lifeboat man: Charles G. Washburn

R. B. Wright
(Signature of officer)

Chief Boatswain
(Official title)

Port of New York

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Morro Castle affair shows a *net profit to the owners of more than* $1,000,000; for the sacrifice of more than 100 lives they were fined a total of $10,000.

As for the Bureau of Navigation and Steamboat Inspection, for the inspection of the 20,000 vessels under its jurisdiction it maintains six boats, five of which admittedly could not pass its own safety regulations and two of which—stated Representative Bacon in Congress last week—have been in use for pleasure purposes by the two sons of the Secretary of Commerce, Daniel S. Roper!

The New Deal has shown a cynical disregard for the safety of passengers on American vessels but it has been responding with alacrity to the demands of the shipowners: into their coffers it pours $30,000,000 per year in subsidies. Secretary Roper was the first to raise the cry of "mutiny" when the crew of the S. S. California struck in San Pedro on March 2 and he has whitewashed every move toward a real investigation. Safety conditions aboard ships are so closely linked with the questions of wages, hours and working conditions for the crew, that an investigation would menace shipowners' profits as well as the high-handed power of the I.S.U. union officialdom. These officials cling in desperation to their threatened power. Utterly discredited on the West Coast and in some of the Gulf port locals, they still retain a wedge in the East with which they and the shipowners hope to break the spirit and the solidarity of the rank and file of the I.S.U. Back of them stands Secretary Roper, with a whitewash brush in one hand and a rubber stamp in the other. He in turn has the financial support of the shipowners and the political backing of the President.

When Ewing Y. Mitchell, a Roper subordinate, began to expose conditions in the Department of Commerce and called for a Department of Justice investigation of the Bureau of Steamboat Inspection, Roosevelt removed him for the sake of "more effective supervision of certain bureaus of the Department of Commerce." Frederick L. Adams, Commander A. McCoy Jones and Thomas M. Woodward are others who have been "purged" from the rolls of the Department of Commerce because they took their orders to "investigate" too seriously. The shameless betrayal by Secretary Perkins of her pledge to the California's strikers is too well known to need repetition. In fact, there can no longer be any doubt as to where the entire Roosevelt administration stands.

First on the list of demands made by the seamen now striking on the East Coast stands: "Adequate safety measures at sea for passengers and crews." It stands first because it is inseparable from all other demands. And the strikers have carried this demand straight to the administration and to the clique who seek to render permanent the present conditions. The strikers demand representation on the investigating body.

NEWYORK MAY 6TH 1936

CHARLES G WASHBURN MAKES THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

THAT I HOLD UNION BOOK NO 3759 ISSUED IN PHILADELPHIA APRIL 5TH 1935.

RED EDMONDS OF VIRGINIA PILOTS [illegible] CALLED AND ASKED ME IF WANTED A JOB IN NEWYORK [illegible] ON [illegible] A SHIP. I WENT TO THE VIRGINIA PILOTS ASSOCIATION AND FROM THERE I WAS SENT TO SEE A MR WALTON OR S[illegible] OF THE I.M.M. OFFICE IN NORFOLK. MR WALTON TOLD ME THERE WAS NO STRIKE OR LABOR TROUBLE WITH SEAMEN IN NEWYORK THAT A FEW COMMUNISTS WERE ON STRIKE OR WORDS TO THAT EFFECT,

MR WALTON THEN WENT WITH FOUR OTHERS AND MYSELF, PAID OUR FARES ON THE CAPE CHARLES FERRY FROM NORFOLK AND [illegible] BOUGHT OUR SUPPER ON THE FERRY AND BOUGHT TICKETS FOR [illegible] ALL FIVE OF US MEN TO NEWYORK.

WE ARRIVED IN NEWYORK SATURDAY MORNING MAY 2ND AND WERE IMMEDIATELY PLACED IN A TAXI-CAB AND RUSHED ABOARD THE SS CALIFORNIA, AFTER HAVING BREAKFAST ON BOARD THE SS CALIFORNIA , WE WENT BEFORE THE SHIPPING COMMISSIONER TO SIGN ON AND I DIDN'T HEAR THE SHIP'S ARTICLES READ AT ANY TIME, NOR DID I PASS A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AT ANY TIME.

ABOUT 1130 AM WE LET GO AND PROCEEDED TO SEA, THE HATCHES WERE SECURED WHEN I WENT ABOARD THE SS CALIFORNIA BUT THE CREW SECURED THE BOOMS.

WHILE I WAS ON BOARD THE SS CALIFORNIA THERE WAS NO FIRE DRILL NOR LIFEBOAT DRILL NOR WAS I GIVEN A STATION CARD OR [illegible] OTHER WRITTEN STATEMENT OR ORDER AS TO MY FIRE STATION OR LIFEBOAT STATION. I WAS PLACED ON THE 12-4 WATCH AND WAS PLACED IN THE CREW'S NEST LOOKOUT FOR ABOUT TWO HOURS SATURDAY AFTERNOON.

AFTER THE VESSEL RETURNED TO NEWYORK SUNDAY MORNING, I AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CREW WERE REFUSED SHORE LEAVE AND WERE HELD ON BOARD AGAINST OUR WILL.

ALTHOUGH I WAS SHIPPED AS AN A.B. SEAMEN ON BOARD THE SS CALIFORNIA AN STOOD LOOKOUT AS STATED ABOVE, I SUFFER FROM A NERVOUS CONDITION WHICH EFFECTS MY EYES, AT TIMES IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO SEE.

AT NO TIME WHILE ABOARD THE SS CALIFORNIA WAS I INSTRUCTED IN HANDLING FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT OR LIFEBOATS.

I FURTHER STATE THAT I AM MAKING THIS STATEMENT OF MY FREE WILL AND THAT I AM SOBER AND IN MY RIGHT MIND AND KNOW WHAT I AM SIGNING.

Chas Washburn

Witness
A B Lannon
J Robertson

Down in Washington the whitewash brush is still working overtime. The latest group assigned to "investigate" is the Copeland Committee, an advisory board to the Commerce Committee of the Senate. Representing the seamen on the board are Paul Scharrenberg, who was expelled from the Sailors Union of the Pacific for corrupt, unwarranted and undemocratic conduct; David E. Grange, vice-president of the I.S.U., who is supplying strikebreakers in the present strike and John Bley, a "stooge" for Victor Olander who organized the terror in Baltimore against seamen who protested against conditions in the union.

Senator Copeland, under whom the committee must work, is sponsor of a series of bills which would act to crush all future rank-and-file protest and which would perpetuate racketeer rule of the maritime unions.

And in New York the shipowners have recruited the aid of the well known National Civic Federation. A vigilante "committee" of 500 will "analyze and report on disturbing conditions in the American Merchant Marine" under the leadership of Archibald Stevenson, who managed the "Red scare" campaign for the notorious Lusk Committee and whom John L. Spivak so thoroughly exposed in his NEW MASSES series, "Plotting America's Pogroms."

Obviously the shipowners and their allies are getting ready to take the whole question of safety at sea and saddle it on the shoulders of the striking members of the I.S.U. Horror stories about "Communist agitators undermining the morale of the American Merchant Marine with Moscow gold" are already beginning to appear.

In the meantime striking seamen, branded "outlaw" by their union officials, are carrying the whole fight for safety at sea, supported by the Citizens' Committee for Striking Seamen. Without rank-and-file representation on the investigating committee, no real inquiry is possible. Without rank-and-file participation, the committee cannot ascertain the true conditions on American boats on which safety at sea depends. Sea travelers may indeed beware of their safety so long as a triple entente of shipowners, union bureaucrats and the United States government is able to frustrate the seamen's struggle for their own and their passengers' security.

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Hearst Corrupts the Youth

PORTER NILES

WASHINGTON.

"SUPPORT THE BOYS' CLUBS AND DO IT NOW. JOIN THE CRUSADE FOR GOOD CITIZENSHIP."

Thus in the usual capital letters, Hearst's Washington Herald leads a cannonade of press, radio and newsreel propaganda intended to blast open the hearts of Washington residents to a $135,000 Fund for 1936 of the Metropolitan Police Boys' Clubs of the District of Columbia.

"How can we save our citizens from being molested by children in crime?" Hearst challenges. "THE METROPOLITAN POLICE OF WASHINGTON HAVE SHOWN US HOW."

There is every reason why Hearst should be whooper-up in chief for the Police Boys' Clubs, since he is a leading spirit of America's newest Big Business drive to make youth safe for reaction. Mrs. Eleanor Patterson, The Washington Herald's publisher, is on the board of directors of the Washington Police Boys' Clubs. The influential offices of secretary and recording secretary are held respectively by William C. Shelton, circulation director of Hearst's Washington Times, and L. Gordon Leech, director of the same paper's own boys' clubs.

This is no mere local matter. Washington is just the hotbed whence seeds, once sprouted, can be transplanted over the nation. Already the District of Columbia police headquarters have been flooded with inquiries as to procedure from eager compatriots from California to Massachusetts. Police Chief Quinn of San Francisco "grew enthusiastic" when approached last week by John A. Remon, chairman of the board of managers of the Washington clubs, and general manager of the Chesapeake and Potomac Electric Company. Mr. Remon explained this spreading process to me. The Boys' Clubs of America, Inc., invited Major Ernest W. Brown, chief of the District police and the fronting founder of the new boys' police order, to describe the project before the Boys' Clubs national convention in Philadelphia on May 18. Hearty endorsement could be expected. The Boys' Clubs of America is the big business organization which long has devoted itself to reclaiming slum boys by giving them sports and the belief that they will grow up to be rich if not President. Its director is William Edwin Hall, president of the Trojan Power Company and Vice-President of Clay Products Company of Pennsylvania; one of its directors is Victor F. Ridder, New York's anti-union W.P.A. administrator.

"Boys' Clubs on Police Station Properties, Under Police Wing," is the central slogan of the new drive. Talking with some of its officials, studying the identity of its backers and its program, I discovered a high fascist potentiality. While addressed ostensibly to the old Boys' Club objectives—saving boys from gangsterhood, training them for good citizenship—the new movement, practically speaking, is an excellent physical and, above all, mental conditioner of potential storm troops. More than a method of enticing the boys out of the orbit of the militant youth movement, it is carefully planned to render them (1) militaristic, (2) chauvinistic, (3) anti-democratic and (4) conscious defenders of the social-economic status quo.

> CIRCULATION AND POWER—*so close to Hearst's heart—have led to the organization of police-controlled, corporation-backed Boys' Clubs in Washington, D. C. The following article charges that young boys are taught the credo of militarism and chauvinism while Negro youth is Jim Crowed into separate organizations. Is this Hearst's latest "experiment" in training Storm Troopers—with a government subsidy?*

Add those elements together, set the sum in the framework of a familiar organizational form with a name long established and you get something well worth watching. Especially in a country which has seen the spectacular failure of successive efforts to gain a mass base for fascism—efforts backed by the same elements as are backing this movement with a new technique thrown in. American youth particularly, as Viola Ilma learned, will have none of anything easily identifiable as fascist. They are moving rather, and with great speed and strength, toward cooperation with militant labor. What fear that arouses among the upper crust is well demonstrated by the administration's effort to sell them the present National Youth Administration, with its six-dollar-a-month aid to high school students, while most youth groups urge passage of the National Youth Act, with its demand for work for all youth on socially justifiable projects. Now here is a movement calculated to accomplish many of the specific objectives of the Viola Ilma type of youth movement, under such deceptive guise that we find the liberal editor, Lowell Mellett of the Scripps-Howard newspapers, fronting for it, in company with bankers, industrialists, patrioteers, jingoes and, of course, the military gentry.

To meet the multiplying nationwide demand for information and guidance, as well as to give an added push to the local campaign, the District of Columbia police swung through this week with an innocuous-looking, slick-paper brochure about the Police Boys' Clubs. In this expensive red-white-and-blue booklet, Major Brown lists five purposes. They include such appealing bait as developing "correct speech, beneficial sports and clean habits"; lessening juvenile delinquency by properly directing recreational activities; creating "interest" among the Washington citizenry as to their "responsibilities" toward youth. But here are the purposes that count: "To cooperate with recognized agencies in their work to develop good citizenship in youth"; and "to teach boys the fundamentals of law observance."

Listen to Vice-President Remon, the telephone-company man:

> You've got to look at our boys some time. There is an almost complete companionship between the boys and the policeman—an entirely new relationship, a new thought.

Remon went on enthusiastically, telling me how he "as a property owner" became interested in the clubs:

> Boys from the lower strata of society grow dissatisfied and become unmanageable. We get them into the clubs and pacify them. They enjoy themselves under proper supervision.

"You mean you get them away from 'subversive' influences?"

Precisely, Remon assured me, you persuade their interests into "wholesome channels."

Could it be possible for the movement to be exploited to get the boys into some political movement?

He smiled assuredly. "Not if we have a good strong board of directors."

And *what* a "good strong" board of directors these Police Boys' Clubs possess!

James E. Colliflower, president, is vice-president of E. B. Cumming and Co., realtors, a rather neat arrangement, particularly as the clubs entail property, real and personal, which is held by the board of trustees. Robert V. Fleming, treasurer, is president of both the American Bankers Association and of Riggs National, the most powerful bank in the Capital, as well as a director of such key public utilities as Washington Railroad and Electric, Potomac Electric Power Company and Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company. Other directors include Leroy Mark, president of American Broadcasting; Laurence E. Rubel, general manager of Underwood and Underwood, photographers; Rear Admiral Cary Travers Grayson, Medical Corps, U.S.A., Woodrow Wilson's physician, now chairman of the American Red Cross, Admiral Joseph Rolle Defrees, U.S.N., Commandant of the Washington Navy Yard;

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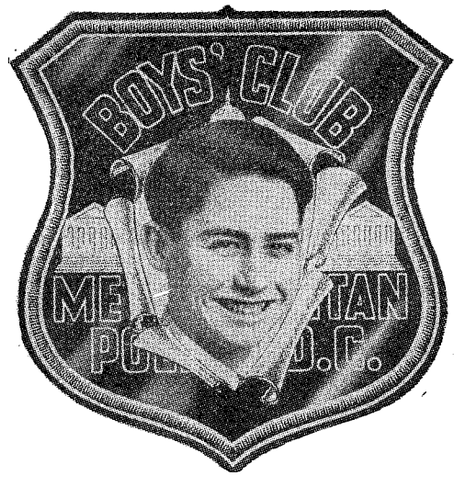
and, of course, Edward Down Shaw, executive secretary of the local Merchants and Manufacturers Association. And, worth special notice, Harry Philip Somerville, not only manager of the Willard Hotel, but also an honorary member of the International Secret Service Association. That organization, according to Mr. Somerville's office, is "a civilian group who cooperate with the Army and National Guard"—i.e. military intelligence.

It would be hard to pick a more typical representation of the active open-shoppers of the business-patriotism-militarism clique. Among them are nine members of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, the union-busting Red-baiting headquarters of America; three members of the New York Stock Exchange; and sundry members of the National Capital Republican Club, the American Bankers Association, American Legion, Elks, Rotary, Sons of the American Revolution, and the Better Business Bureau.

Were it the function of these board members merely to lend *éclat* to the stationery, in short, were they mere front, their identity might be less significant. But the constitution of the Police Boys' Clubs makes the *board of directors* "final authority in all matters pertaining to the operation of the clubs."

The directors develop and maintain all activities of club units, secure and develop "volunteer" leaders for such activities and suggest and provide "entertainment and outstanding activities."

The clubs are not *boys'* clubs at all, but a setup in which the boys are mere charges and pawns of Big Business and the police in the persons of managers, trustees, governors, directors. Democracy, self-government, is given not so much as a nod; the boys cannot decide what they shall do or who shall lead them in it.



If there be any doubt as to what type of activities the directors will choose—one of the first things they actually did, here, was to ask every boy to become a *Hearst Junior Birdman of the Air*. This was told me by Joseph P. Meshkoff, the police sergeant who is the proud director of the Washington Police Boys' Clubs. By paying just ten cents, the sergeant explained, "the boys get free instruction in aviation." Thus the boy's dream of being a flyer is played upon—at the hands of a tutor supplied by Hearst's Times-Herald, as rabid an exponent of air-armament as exists in America.

The Boy Scouts, Y.M.C.A. and similar institutions supported by "beneficent" industrialists are directed by physical culturists, outdoor men, educators, social workers, who labor as wage-earners at the task of training youth. But not so in the new Police Boys' Clubs—*they are run by policemen.*

"The idea is to make the policeman the boy's pal," said the sergeant-director. "The idea is to have the boy work with the policeman, not against him."

Does that mean work "with the policeman" psychologically today and with billy and tearbomb tomorrow, on strike duty, in smashing unemployed demonstrations? Certainly the most spectacular "work" of the Capital police in these recent years has been firing the shacks of the Bonus Marchers, flinging monoxide gas into the nostrils of the Hunger Marchers, tailing militant labor leaders at N.R.A. code hearings and daily hounding and terrorizing the unemployed Negro population of Washington.

In the clubroom located "on Police Station properties," the boy attends evening assemblies, listening to speakers. Who will do the speaking? "Only the most prominent citizens," said Sergeant Meshkoff. "Mostly officers of the clubs—they're always available."

There is a library period for the boys, but the books made available are "strictly censored" by the board of directors. In this city, where the public school censorship under the famous "Red-riders" has ruled the official organs of the N.A.A.C.P. and the National Urban League from Negro schools, and banned such mildly progressive reading as the magazine, Scholastic, and condemned the works of Charles R. Beard as Communistic and subversive, the implication is obvious.

Now in their third year, the local clubs boast a membership of 3,400 boys between six and nineteen. There are three in the District, with a summer camp in Maryland. The neediest population group, the Negroes, formerly were excluded from the police boys' program. Now, with placards blazing on the streets and radio blaring every ten minutes at certain periods of the day, Negro boys also have come under the wing of the project—come in under the best Jim-Crow technique. The police expect to spend $19,000 upon a segregated *Colored Police Boys' Club.*

"Such Interesting People You Meet"

ROBERT FORSYTHE

THE working press has every right to be suspicious of individuals who maintain that their six months on The Charleston (W. Va.) Mail entitles them to respect as an Old Master and I will say no more about my own career than to remark that it was good while it lasted. My style was not perfected at the time, but my legs were in excellent shape and on a small-town afternoon daily you need to get around. I remember that I got down around 7:30 in the morning and was always cleaned up by 8 at night, coming back after supper to get a little copy ready for the linotyper who came on early next morning.

But my remembrances of that job are inextricably joined with an ancient reporter who had worked on a Columbus, Ohio, paper and had extreme ideas about journalism. His theory was summed up in one phrase: "The thing you want to learn about the newspaper business is to get out of it." He was a little man given to the bottle, but he was a good reporter and threw the remark over his shoulder when dashing around the news-room. He walked in brisk little steps, never took his coat off even on the hottest days and didn't encourage conversation. When he wanted to talk, he talked; otherwise he paid no attention to you. I recognized him then as the first cynic I had known and I'm afraid he did something to warp my nature.

When people talk to me nostalgically about the "smell of ink," I am at a loss because if I tell them I worked on a newspaper and never smelled ink, they look at me. The fault lay with my friend, Martin. He had an unmitigated hate of the men in the composing room. One of his pronouncements was: "All printers are bastards." When he got unduly communicative, he would say: "Kid, listen; never talk to a printer. They'll double-cross you as soon as look at you. They always get theirs and to hell with you."

It was only later that I understood what he meant. He had been working on a paper in Columbus which was having its troubles. When Saturday night came around and money was scarce in the till, the reporters

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waited for theirs and the printers did not. Martin felt this was not sporting on the part of the manual workers and I agreed with him. Our paper was paying regularly and I had some difficulty in refraining from asking the management if it wouldn't help them if I missed a week's pay. They probably would have been willing to afford me martyrdom, but I could never get up the courage to ask them.

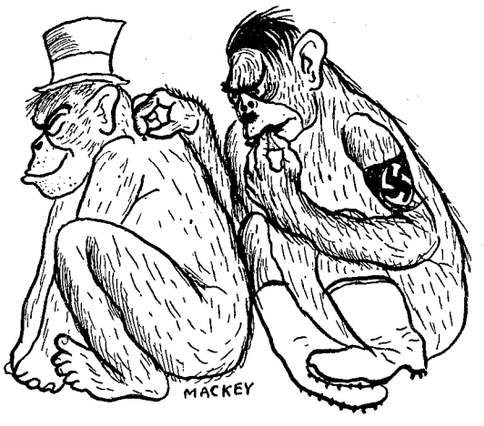
They did allow me to do quite a bit of work, however. I was getting a salary of $18 (big pay in those war days and great pay now, I understand) and I made an extra $2 a week by doing the West Side news. This meant I had to go over on the West Side every afternoon after my regular work and traipse in and out of stores getting personals. It irked me and I finally dodged most of it by getting a list of names I could repeat on several times a week. I remember that Clem Shaffer of St. Albans was always coming in to visit relatives. My work must have been all right because the rival morning paper called me in mysteriously one afternoon and offered me $25 a week. When I told my boss this he had a splendid idea. I would stay with him and pick up $8 extra doing outside correspondent jobs. In the course of time I became the West Virginia political expert for The Pittsburgh Gazette-Times (this will give old-timers an idea of the period) and some sort of correspondent for The Cincinnati Times-Star. Readers of The Pittsburgh Gazette-Times who gave any credence to that newspaper's West Virginia political expert were plain insane because I had only been in the state two months, there had been no sessions of the legislature and I had to ask people for the names of prominent politicians. But there were no complaints from the readers and none from the editors. I wrote the nonsense solemnly and they published it with equal stupidity.

What I am establishing is that once a newspaperman, always a reader of newspapers. I remember suggesting to W. D. Eaton, late editor of Plain Talk, that I do an article on the ills suffered by members of the craft. He replied that reporters without exception were a lot of romantic jackasses who deserved all the kicks they got because they didn't have the guts to fight back. I ended up by doing an article on how The Christian Science Monitor suppresses the news, which it does with great assiduity. My interest, therefore, in the Newspaper Guild is based as much on fascination as support.

The idea that newspapermen could start a Guild is enough to stagger me; the further notion that it is now so strong and aggressive that it will consider again (with some prospect of success, I understand) affiliation with the A. F. of L. is quite beyond me. The shades of all the old Martins must rise to haunt the Guild.

In any event it is evident that the Guild has arisen to haunt the publishers. The days when they could pay their help in romance seem to be gone and the publishers are hurt in that part of their nature which shelters their estheticism. When they awake now in terror in the middle of the night they see the hulking form of Heywood Broun walking menacingly about on the ceiling. I haven't seen Editor and Publisher lately, but in the old days it was full of pictures of Mr. and Mrs. John B. Arbuthnot, publisher of The Fort Wayne Blabber, on the deck of the Berengaria with their five children. I imagine Mr. and Mrs. Arbuthnot are still traveling, it is certain that Mr. Arbuthnot fills the bar on the Normandie with plaints about his hired help who are not only making life miserable for him by asking for a minimum of $20 a week, but are intent upon capturing the newspapers for nefarious purposes of their own. I can remember the managers in the days of the Actors' Strike crying aloft that what the actors wanted was not better working conditions, but control of the industry. If Actors Equity succeeded we should have an era of chaos with actors bossing playwrights, scenic designers, orchestra leaders and producers. It was even worse when the strike was finally won by the support of the stage hands. Indeed, Mr. George Cohan proclaims, if Equity wins I will never again produce a play on the American stage. Mr. Cohan produced a play last season which flopped, due no doubt to the actors, of which Mr. Cohan was one.

Well grounded, therefore, as I am in the duty of the press to its news, I was dismayed several weeks ago at finding a story in The New York World-Telegram which had all the marks of inspiration. I must ask you to believe that I am not writing this from afterthought. When I saw that dispatch in The Telegram from Rupert Hughes in Hollywood denouncing the Screen Writers Guild, I experienced a shock. There has been nothing like it in a New York paper (Hearst papers always excepted) in years. It was upon the receipt of my copy of The Hollywood Reporter several days later that I pieced the thing together. Mr. Hughes, it seemed, had received a congratulatory telegram from Roy W. Howard, of the Scripps-Howard papers, saying that



His Political Assignment — *Mackey*

save the screen from sovietiza
actly what he was trying to do
of the Newspaper Guild. It tr
ther that when Mr. Howard s
gram, he was temporarily acting
The Telegram in place of Lee
was on vacation. What he rec
turn from Rupert Hughes was
P. Mangold puts it) an editor
forthwith ran as a news-story. I
Howard is very worried about
porters may do to his papers
hesitation in doing it himself.

That Roy Howard should
anxious about Hollywood is
something, for I have been inform
porters on The City News in I
are working for $12 a week, r
the papers for $18 and $20, with
editor of one paper getting $35.
well-founded rumor that many
tional radio programs will be tran
year to Hollywood where music
hired for half the New York scal
a very pretty setup and neither R
of the "liberal" Scripps-Howard
the other publishers have any stc
Newspaper Guild which will be
labor movement. The heartenii
that what Eaton of Plain Talk
newspapermen is no longer true.
found that they can get the sam
from being on the inside of hi
making $50 or $75 a week as th
$18, and their families can be ex
with them.

So if the newspaper profession
word from me, I can assure them
are all right. It will be perfec
join the A.F. of L. Since my e
have met printers and find ther
people. Just as the stagehands wo
for the actors, the day will come
reporters will be saved from Hea
compositors. I have never seen an
was any less a prima donna beca
ried a union card or any less an
am anxious for the Newspaper Gu
strong institution because one ne
when he will go back to his firs
shouldn't like to repeat that early
of eighteen hours a day, romantic
It ended with me in a sanatoriu
health.

Which reminds me that I am
finished with the story of my o
Martin. It occurred to me one d
was strange he was no longer
Columbus paper he saved. Evid
printers hadn't ruined it with their
on regular pay for it was now kr
big moneymaker. I asked Martin

"They brought in an efficiency
found that they could get along v
less reporters," he said sourly.
fired me. . . . Go on, now, and
ering me. You'd better get out
estate page or you'll be getting fi
self."

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Gus Peck

Memorial

MICH

HERE is an anthology of poems by fifty-nine young soldiers killed in the late war.[1] Their average age was around 22; most of them were from the English universities, affected by the tranquil imperialist culture. Had they lived, they might have been by now the usual hard-crusted policemen of empire; army officers, junior diplomats, investment brokers, patriotic professors; a few, perhaps, might have been poets.

But they died in their youth, before hereditary attitudes had hardened, before they could become cogs in the great apparatus of British oppression.

The true reason for which a war is fought may always be found in the peace treaty that results. Surely, the Versailles treaty and its aftermath have made clear by now that the last war was a brawl between greedy traders —a dollar-war for loot, markets, colonies and investments of the House of Morgan.

In war-time, however, the bankers and diplomats know how to conceal their real objects. They have devised a system of romantic lying which they throw like a marvelous cloak of many colors around the leprous figure of a dollar-war. Like Herr Goebbels, genius of the government lie, they know how to inflame masses of simpler men into fighting for what seem to be all the ancient pieties and nobilities.

This is the poignancy of this anthology of poets murdered in youth. They came from the upper class, but being young, were generous, gullible, noble. They believed themselves crusaders in
as much victims of
as the masses of f
and cockneys whom

It is curious tha
thology, is the ener
There is not a sing
the enemy. The ji
roared their cheap h
the office colonels
Creel intellectuals,
profiteers, and the
young men reflecte
and dedicated them

England meant
war-makers; to this
country garden, the
football fields and
Much of the poetr
school boy, or tha
buried deep under
British soul.

"Home—what
them sings, ecsta
of some dead so
of Paradise, and
little wood, and l
Rooks sail overhe
"God, but it's En
there's a cricket fie

Yet there is no
though most are co
develops a suicidal
stand in days of
American Alan See

Casualty List

(*Killed in action August* 29, 1918)

how long
be Something
nd the faces of poor men
ate uniformity of dullness
g trivial meanness?

k them at will
nd singing patriotic doggerel)
g hell,
rably;
vitable comes,
them
eanly?

HENRY LAMONT SIMPSON.

em for Doomed Youth

(*Killed in action November* 4, 1918)

ing bells for these who die as cattle?
e monstrous anger of the guns.
e stuttering rifle's rapid rattle
out their hasty orisons.
y for them; no prayers nor bells,
oice of mourning save the choirs,—
demented choirs of wailing shells;
s calling for them from sad shires.

lles may be held to speed them all?
he hands of boys, but in their eyes
e the holy glimmers of goodbyes.
lor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
ers the tenderness of patient minds,
slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

WILFRED OWEN.

To Germany

(*Killed in action October* 30, 1915)

You are blind like us. Your hurt no man designed,
And no man claimed the conquest of your land.
But gropers both through fields of thought confined
We stumble and we do not understand.
You only saw your future bigly planned,
And we, the tapering paths of our own mind,
And in each other's dearest ways we stand,
And hiss and hate. And the blind fight the blind.

When it is peace, then we may view again
With new-won eyes each other's truer form
And wonder. Grown more loving-kind and warm
We'll grasp firm hands and laugh at the old pain,
When it is peace. But until peace, the storm,
The darkness and the thunder and the rain.

CHARLES HAMILTON SORLEY.

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Day, 1936

L GOLD

oly cause, and so were
e imperialist profiteers
iers, machinists, clerks
ey commanded.

nly once, in this an-
referred to as Huns.
oem of real hatred of
slackers at the rear
the contract-grabbers,
Park Avenue dames,
ortunist politicians,
In the trenches the
he meaning of life
to death.

and empire to the
England was the
on the heath, the
ind hearts in peril.
iat of the homesick
itional nature-lover
urious barbed-wire

ct place!" one of
Another poem tells
ho reach the gates
ithin. They see a
knee-deep in grass.
church bell peals.
meone said, "and

n these poems,
th death. War
ard to under-
The romantic
es his rendez-

vous with Death, and young Richard Dennys says it is "better far to pass away while the limbs are strong and young." Others ache with the new love of life with which the vision of death has filled them. They mourn the friends who have already died, and try to find mystic consolations. But in them, too, the mood is one of heroism, the job to be done, the dear land to be redeemed from its enemy at the cost of a death. "By all the glories of the day, by beauty lavishly outpoured," sings W. N. Hodgson, "make me a soldier, Lord. By all delights that I shall miss, help me to die, O Lord!"

Most of this is naive, trustful, heroic boys' poetry, fit to be grieved over as much as the senseless death of a child.

I don't know the materials the editor of this volume made his choices from, but he has included too few of the maturer poets who died.

These were the young men like Rupert Brooke and Charles J. B. Masefield, to whom the war came bringing a clean and holy purpose in life. "I was so vague in 1914," wrote young Masefield, "tossed upon too many purposes, and worthless; moody; to this world or the other lost, essential nowhere; without calm and mirthless; and now I have gained one for many ends, see my straight road stretch out so white, so slender, the happy road, the road of all my friends. . . ."

---

[1] The Valiant Muse, edited by Frederic W. Ziv, Putnam, $2.50.

Gus Peck

Marching

(*Killed in France April* 1, 1918)

My eyes catch ruddy necks
Sturdily pressed back.
All a red-brick moving glint,
Like flaming pendulums, hands
Swing across the khaki—
Mustard color khaki—
To the automatic feet.

We husband the ancient glory
In these bared necks and hands.
Not broke in the forge of Mars;
But a subtler brain beats iron
To shoe the hoofs of death.
Who paws dynamic air now?—
Blind fingers loose an iron cloud
To rain immortal darkness
On strong eyes.

ISAAC ROSENBERG.

Judgment

(*Killed in action October* 7, 1916)

So be it, God, I take what Thou dost give,
And gladly give what Thou dost take away.
For me Thy choice is barren days and grey.
Unquestioning Thy ordered days I live,
I do not seek to sift in Reason's sieve—
Thou rangest far beyond our Reason's sway.
We are but poor, uncomprehending clay,
For Thou to mould as Thou dost well conceive.

But when my blanched days of sorrow end,
And this poor clay for funeral is drest,
Then shall my soul to Thy Gold Gate ascend,
Then shall my soul soar up and summon Thee
To tell me why. And as Thou answerest,
So shall I judge Thee, God, not Thou judge me.

LESLIE COULSON.

To My Daughter Betty

(*Killed in action September,* 1916)

In wiser days, my darling rosebud, blown
To Beauty proud as was your mother's prime,
In that desired, delayed, incredible time,
You'll ask why I deserted you, my own,
And the dear heart that was your baby throne,
To dice with death. And, oh! They'll give you rhyme
And reason: some will call the thing sublime,
And some decry it in a knowing tone.

So here, while the mad guns curse overhead,
And tired men sigh with mud for couch and floor,
Know that we fools, now with the foolish dead,
Died not for flag, nor King, nor Emperor,—
But for a dream, in a herdsman's shed,
And for the secret scripture of the poor.

THOMAS M. KETTLE.

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Spain and Revolution

ILYA EHRENBOURG

AFTER my visit to Spain in 1931, I wrote the following:

"Spain has all the 'forward-looking men' you may wish for, but unfortunately they don't know their own country. Few of them are aware of the existence right in their midst of a dark and wild jungle: hungry villages where peasants steal acorns for food, whole areas populated with degenerates and infested with typhus and malaria, wholesale executions and an abundance of jails that resemble medieval dungeons. . . .

"Since the revolution thousands of streets in Spain have been renamed. The whole country has been rechristened. The feudal-bourgeois monarchy—the patrimony of incompetent bureaucrats, fabulously wealthy landowners, counts, grafters, hangmen, British hirelings and verbose liberals—is now pompously called 'The Toilers' Republic'.

"The Civil Guards, however,—forty thousand men in tri-cornered hats—still indulge from time to time in a bit of target practice, getting ready for a grand shooting party.

"Indeed, Spain is neither Carmen nor the novels of Blasco Ibanez; neither the diplomacy of Alejandro Lerroux nor imported Argentine gigolos and Perpinian 'malaga'. Twenty million ragged Don Quixotes, barren cliffs, bitter injustice, songs as sad as the rustle of an olive tree, the rumble of heroic strikers, compassion and humaneness—that is the real Spain. Too long Spain has remained on the sidelines. Too long she has appealed to the fancy of dreamers with her pride, ignorance and loneliness. Now, however, the Spanish people have got a desire to live; the country is joining the world of labor, struggle and hatred."

When the translation of my book was published there, the republican newspapers were indignant. One of them even demanded a diplomatic protest to "prevent the dissemination abroad of false information." During my recent visit to Spain I met a representative of this paper. He sighed as he confessed to me: "Unfortunately, you were right."

On the surface the country seems not to have changed. The *caballero* dandies still flock to the Alcala. If you ask them, they will tell you proudly that they are "individualists." Idlers, as of yore, sit in the cafés from morning till night. They discuss politics and close their eyes sensuously while bootblacks polish their immaculate, shiny shoes with chamois. Respectable bourgeois are seen through the windows of clubhouses. Old women still clutter the doorways of churches. Smartly attired ladies kiss the hands of fat bishops. The monks drink wine in the saloons and pat the buttocks of "trusted" maids.

During Easter week about a dozen "holy virgins," attired in costly mantles, paraded the streets of Seville. The fast trains brought flocks of pious *caballeros* from Madrid who, as soon as they reached the hotel, threw off their earthly attires and donned the clothes "of repenting Nazarenes." In spite of the result of the elections, Holy Mother received a new altar-canopy this year—a present from the Madrid ladies who contributed two pounds of silver monthly.

On the first page of the newspaper *El Liberal* one can read articles about "the high morality of the workers," while on the last page dozens of advertisements announce: *"Caballeros*: Do not forget to visit Madame Rita's Salon. Beautiful girls: brunettes, blondes. Also foreign girls."

The same skyscrapers, the same hovels, the same old poverty. The peasant still trods behind his prehistoric plough. Girls carry heavy pitchers of water on their heads. The worker eats watery soup while the peasant only dreams of it. The children in the streets are ragged, barefooted and forgotten. To get into a school is like winning in a lottery—too many children and too few schools. Life is hard and cruel like the rocks of the Castilian plain. . . .

The same tri-cornered hats. Like Goya's horrors, they prod amongst the slums, amongst the olive trees, amongst the children. They remind one of Casa Viejas, of shots on the fields of Extramadura, of morgues and crying women, of hungry children. . . .

In Segovia the fascists shouted: "Down with Azana! Wake up, Spain!" The workers attempted to disperse the fascists. The Civil Guards began to shoot at the workers. What do they care, these killers in tri-cornered hats, that Azana is now Premier of Spain? They know only one thing: always shoot at workers; never at respectable *caballeros*. On April 14, an officer of the Civil Guard attempted to assassinate Azana. In the skirmish that followed, the would-be assassin was shot. At his funeral the officers of the Civil Guard marched with slogans: "Long live the Civil Guard!"

The president was changed. The presidential bodyguard, however, General Batet, who "pacified" Catalonia in October, 1934 was not dismissed from his post. The police still keep lists of "rebels." On soiled and time-worn cards, the names of men who revolted against the governments of the King, of Lerroux and of Gil Robles are recorded. Some of the names on these cards are those of present-day ministers who, as far as the police are concerned, are still dangerous "rebels."

A strike of metal workers took place in Barcelona. The police raided the trade-union office. Eighty workers were arrested. The Catalonian government was disturbed; it asked the police to free the workers. Much against their will the police were forced to give in. After a few days, however, they repeated their raid and arrested 120 men.

How can one explain such acts? This is no longer politics but simply a conditioned reflex—faithfulness to old established habits.

One of the present dignitaries of Barcelona once belonged to Primo de Rivera's fascist *"Union Patriotica."* This organization used to sign its proclamations with a "U.P." (Today on the walls of Barcelona houses are painted three letters: "U.H.P."—*"Unios, Hermanos Proletarios,"* the password of the Asturian revolutionists). Recently a satirical magazine depicted him looking at a wall upon which U.H.P. was painted, saying: "Strange: In my day it was written without an H." The magazine was confiscated. The dignitary was not touched.

In Madrid, a group of fascists who have attacked the home of the Socialist leader Largo Caballero are being tried. They are sentenced to a fine of fifty pesetas. The same court tries the case of the young socialist, Sotero Feito. Feito did not attack anybody; he is merely guilty of carrying a gun. He is sentenced to four years in jail.

The same laws, the same judges, the same jailers. And yet Spain is no longer the same.

What then has changed? Let me answer as it would be done in the theater: "The same characters and revolution."

Huge arenas for bull fights. Toreadors are no longer popular in Spain. The promoters tempt the people: "Lottery tickets are given away free. You may win an automobile."

The huge arenas are rented for meetings. Hundreds of thousands of Spaniards gather in order to hear Pasionaria, Largo Caballero and Diaz. The orators speak lengthily but the audience listens attentively. Meetings everywhere: in theaters, movie houses, parks and village barns. Everywhere the portraits of Marx, Lenin, Stalin and Thaelmann are displayed. Young Communists in blue shirts with red ties and young Socialists in red shirts act as the "militia." They keep order. And indeed, an exemplary discipline is maintained by all.

Spaniards are brave and patient. Only one thing they lacked: *discipline*. Now discipline has become their by-word. They speak of it persistently and with enthusiasm.

Peasants wrapped in blankets are riding on the backs of donkeys. They come through the snowy mountains of Castille and through the burning steppes of Mursi. Whither are they going? To the market place? To a

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bull fight? To mass? . . . No, to a meeting.

The poet Rafael Alberti reads his poems at these meetings. Even the most cautious of critics are compelled to admit that Alberti is a good poet. Now he has found an audience to whom poetry is as necessary as bread. When I look upon Alberti I remind myself of Mayakovsky reading "Our March" in the circus to workers and Red Army men. How can one say any longer that poetry and revolution are enemies?

Every day strikes occur either in Bilbao, Saragossa, Malaga or Santander. The workers refuse to remain hungry.

I was in Barcelona during the strike of the metal workers. Forty-five thousand men went out on strike. They demanded a forty-two hour week instead of forty-eight and an increase in wages. They won. They did not even have to send out pickets: there were no scabs.

The Government forced the factory owners to reemploy the workers who were fired during the years of reaction. The scabs are replaced by old workers. In the struggle between workers' solidarity and fear, solidarity won. Today, even the cowards dare not lag behind their comrades. Hundreds of strikes have been won. Not even once were the bosses victorious.

The longshoremen, the office workers, the carpenters, the compositors are striking. In Madrid, the pupils of the schools go out on strike. They demand heated schools, free lunches and the dismissal of fascist teachers.

On April 16, fascists shot at a group of workers and the Civil Guard revolted against the government. Until four in the morning the "Peoples House" was crowded with representatives from factories. They demanded a general strike. Action is the order of the day. Even before the trade unions had a chance to issue the call, the strike had already commenced. Street cars stopped running. Stores and cafes were closed. Automobiles disappeared from the streets. On the streets of Madrid, children played football. In the hotel where I lived the waiters, the elevator operators and the dishwashers struck.

The bosses declared a lockout. In Asturias the owners of the Carrandi mines decided to suspend work because, as they said, there was an overproduction of coal. The miners decided to operate the mines at their own risk. In Barcelona the workers are operating a glass factory which was abandoned by its owner. The workers of the Mattis textile mills, having learned that the board of directors decided to close the factories, appointed organizers to study the business and carry on the work. The board of directors of a Madrid street-car system, in spite of a government decree, refused to reemploy workers whom they had fired in 1934. The workers decided to take over the company. They found broken cars, an empty treasury and a large indebtedness. In two weeks they raised the income of the line. The magical letters U.H.P. are now painted in glowing red on *"Ciudad Lineal"* street-cars.

"Success at last, gentlemen—we've developed a toy poison gas!" *Jack Markow*

The government neither takes the part of the owners nor legalizes the existing conditions. All that, it says, is "temporary." Let's not quarrel about adjectives. One thing, however, is certain: much that is regarded as "temporary" may last for a long, long time.

The government is also, as it has been widely heralded, preparing an agrarian reform. To this date, however, this agrarian "reform" is nothing more than fat volumes of proposed laws. In the meantime millions of landless peasants are dying of hunger.

On March 25, sixty thousand peasants of Extramadura, following instructions given to them by the Federation of Agrarian Workers, occupied three thousand estates. Count Arnachuelos has fifty thousand hectares of untilled soil—the count is a great lover of hunting. The agrarian reform, about which "specialists" have been debating in the Cortes for five years, was accomplished by the peasants of Extramadura in one day.

The masthead of the newspaper published by the Federation of Agricultural Workers carries the following words by Lenin: "If you wait for the laws you will remain without laws and without land." The peasants first disarm the guards of the estates, occupy the property and take inventory. Then they send the ministry of agriculture an act about the transfer of the land to the collectives.

It is the people themselves who are now carrying on a fight against the Jesuits who have ruled Spain for many centuries. From their monastery in Jerez monks shot at a workers' demonstration. Without any delay the demonstrators set fire to the monastery. The monasteries in Gandia, Jativa and Alberiqua were occupied by the workers and turned into schools. The young Communists of the city of Vigo made a People's Center of their monastery.

The leaders of the Spanish proletariat are worthy of their name. The secretary of the Communist Party, Jose Diaz, is a baker. He is gay and vivacious, like the true Andalusian that he is. The jails in which he was confined were his universities. The workers refer to him as "Our Joe." Largo Caballero is a Socialist. The October events gave him new life. Caballero is a fearless and true revolutionist. He is sixty-six years old but his spirit is young. The leader of the Communist women, Dolores Ibarruri, is affectionately referred to as "La Pasionaria." She is the daughter of a miner and the wife of a miner. When she was fourteen years old she worked as a maid. Later she became a seamstress. "La Pasionaria" speaks beautifully and her words always carry weight. Her enemies fear her. When once in the Cortes she called Gil Robles a *killer,* he turned pale and remained silent.

"Our children deserve to be happy," cried the working women of Madrid, showing their children to Pasionaria. And she who intimately knows poverty and prisons, whose mother was killed by Civil Guards, smiled happily and replied:

"Yes, they will be happy."

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Vice Ring Goes Round and Round

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

WITHIN the memory of any adult New Yorker the vice ring has been an old, if not respected, inhabitant. Efforts to kill it or exile it have failed. In the nineties, the Reverend Dr. Parkhurst went after it, forcing the state legislature to make an investigation. The politicians on the Lexow committee showed a considerable lack of enthusiasm but under what Dr. Parkhurst euphemistically called "discipline" enough research work was done to fill two soberly written, but explosive, volumes. The Reverend Dr. Parkhurst won a Hearst column and a moral reputation and lived to see the process gone over several times with different trimmings. In 1912, the scandal over the murder of the gambler Rosenthal which sent a police lieutenant and three gorillas to the chair and revealed rings within rings of politics and vice, brought in a Fusion administration. The silk-hat reform mayor, John Purroy Mitchel, who successfully snubbed a metropolis, reconciled the people to Tammany. Then came the Walker administration with its tin boxes and high jinks. The reform wave would not have been sufficient to sweep out Jimmy if there had not been too many unemployed, some of them clubbed by Walker's police, who drew comparisons between the overflowing tin boxes and the bare relief chests. The vice ring rolled in, too, in the Seabury investigation that followed and another reform administration entered. In between these major items in the city's *Chroniques Scandaleuses* there have been other investigations, each one dethroning, at least for a time, a new Czar of the Underworld. The vice ring went round.

Today, the old melodrama is being staged all over again in a New York Court. The actors are Charles (Lucky Luciano) Lucania, the "vice lord," and a long retinue: David (Little Davie) Betillo, second in command; Benny Spiller, described as the "loan shark" and identified as an investor in the capital funds of the combination; James Frederico, general manager; Ralph Liguori, stick-up expert who held up the delinquents in the business when they failed to meet their payments to the ring; Jack Ellenstein, David Miller, Al Wiener and Peter Harris, bookers, that is, men who assigned the girls to the various houses (the last three pleaded guilty); Tom (the Bull) Pennochio, treasurer; Abe Wahrman, collector, formerly a strong-arm man; Jesse Jacobs and Meyer Berkman, bondsmen. These are the prosecuting attorney's identifications.

Up to late 1932, according to the salty chronicle of Prosecutor Dewey, prostitution was a thriving industry, but in the primitive competitive stage of capitalism. At that point the organizing ability of the business titan, Luciano, who had specialized previously in dope, was called in. The industry was modernized; competition was eliminated to the distress of several rugged individuals who testified at the trial. The monopoly prospered and Luciano lived, along with other big business men, in the Waldorf Astoria. The organization was proceeding with its legal defense corps, its medical services and so on, in a highly efficient manner; it was even contemplating replacing commissions by regular salaries when that act of God, the crime investigation, occurred.

At this writing it is doubtful if the prosecution will be able to present enough direct evidence to convict Luciano. Its chief is Thomas E. Dewey, a Republican appointed by the Democratic Governor Lehman, when it became clear even to the plain citizen that the incumbent District Attorney William C. Dodge, the man who tried to divert attention by investigating The Daily Worker, was too closely tied to Tammany to look well on an investigation commission.

A special feature of the trial stressed in the newspapers, is the "blue ribbon jury." It includes two bankers, a manufacturer, a book publisher, an importer, an investment counsel, a consulting engineer, two accountants and an editor. Such people usually have no trouble being excused from jury duty but apparently the trial, from the general sessions of which the public has been barred, has a certain appeal to them. Anti-vice societies never seem to have had trouble in getting the best people on their directorial boards. Organized whore harrying and fox hunting seem to be upper-class sports.

The course of the trial is what one might expect. In every day's testimony the capitalist system is indicted and the cause of prostitution given in simple phrases like those of the widow left destitute with two children who testified that she took to prostitution to support her children; or like those of the girl who was told by her booker, who helped her get out, that she was too nice a girl to be in this business. Taking a job as a waitress she gave respectability a year's trial but found that on an average weekly income of twelve dollars she could not afford virtue. She returned to her booker and her old work. In the courtroom she cried out that she had done so "to solve an economic problem." The big papers had no adjectives to decorate this testimony; they used the adjectives in the description of the girls, brassy adjectives to give the impression the girls were brassy and tough.

It should be said here that investigations like these are not without their value. The trouble is that they are never thorough enough, never dare touch the sources. Perhaps it is asking too much that social and economic causes be searched by district attorneys, and that the indictment be properly drawn out by them against the capitalist system. The tradition of these periodical investigations is to leave these things alone but to spot villains for the public. As the "vice lord" and his aides disappear into prison, where that happens, it gives the public the illusion that the evil vanishes with them. It is pertinent therefore to note that not even all the individual villains are here, not even all those whom the layman might expect to see there. So large a combination as the Luciano ring, running hundreds of houses, could not have functioned a day without police indulgence. Business of that sort has to do a good deal of greasing, has to subsidize its political protectors. Why are the police and the "higher ups" not in the courtroom?

It is probably no accident—publishers being business men—that a book about prostitutes (*Sterile Sun,* by Caroline Slade. Vanguard Press, $2.75) should come out just at this time. In it four prostitutes give the sort of testimony that prosecuting attorneys in capitalist courts are not especially concerned to bring out. The author, who got her information while doing social work in the Children's Court, tells, as nearly as possible in their own words, the stories of four prostitutes, True Stories that Macfadden, however, would never print. One came from a family living on charity relief. At the age of twelve she was sent to live in a household where she was what the old word truly expressed, a "slavey." She was seduced shortly after, was maltreated, became a prostitute and died of a self-abortion. Another, an orphan girl sent into domestic service, married, lost her husband, married again and fought desperately on her earnings as a prostitute to keep the children born to her, in and out of wedlock, lost them finally and was sent for a long term to a reformatory. The mother of the third girl lived by taking in "boarders." The girl tried at first to make a "regular" living clerking in a ten-cent store. Finally she let a swell-dressed man date her. She knew the ropes well enough to blackmail him with the threat of rape; always she got all she could, saved money, tried to keep herself "clean" but lived in morbid terror that the "syph" would catch up with her before she had enough money saved up to negotiate for a husband and go respectable. The fourth girl came from an orphan asylum, was sent into domestic service and lived so bleak a life she responded, like someone famished, to the first gesture of kindness. The gesture was made by a pimp.

On evidence like this there is only one just sentence possible, the sentence to be

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passed in time when the real criminal faces the working class as its judge, in the court of social revolution. Till then we will have other "vice lords," other legal Galahads, ther reform administrations. The crime and eform cycle is like the boom and depression ycle, endemic to the capitalist system.

Curing prostitution by reform gestures is old in American history. Over a hundred years ago "Magdalen Societies" were organized throughout the country for the redemption of "fallen females." The program went heavy on sermons but gave this much recognition to economics: that it sought to find work for the "rescued." They were placed in sweatshops or in domestic service. Which was the worse it would be hard to say, but both were bad enough to make the women decide that respectability on those terms was a poor bargain; and they returned to the more cheerful streets.

In one of the annual reports issued by such a society, consisting of "some of the most wealthy and respectable inhabitants," the Female Moral Reform Society of the City of New York, it was stated that in six months, thirty "females" were entered into its rescue home. Of those three went into domestic service, four were sent to the Asylum of the New York Female Benevolent Society and one "took care of herself." The other twenty-two returned, alas, to their former life. "Some pains have been taken," the report went on, "to ascertain their history after they left the Society's home, and it has been found that two or three have died sudden and awful deaths."

A related organization, the Anti-Vice Society, founded by Anthony Comstock and now presided over by the suaver and more modern Mr. John S. Sumner, published a report in 1934 which threw a reflective glance over its sixty-two years of activity. There was, one might say, in the manner of the report, a satisfied rubbing of hands that the devil was still active; the society still had work to do, more than ever, in fact.

In the words of the report, "After a period of sixty-two years of continuous activity the services of the society are still essential to our social makeup," and it went on to list the number of pornographic books bound and unbound, dirty postcards and photographs that it had confiscated.

The Committee of Fourteen, another "blue ribbon" organization, reported that it had cleaned out the notorious Raines Law Hotels, the Bowery dives and the tenderloin joints; that it had broken the heart of Mollie Rearden, social-climbing madame, who was arrested just as she was getting herself established in society; that it had brought low Rosie Hertz, queen of the underworld who had once obtained an injunction against the police interfering with her business: but then, when all seemed neatly reformed, the unkillable thing reappeared, gaudier and noisier than ever, in the speakeasies an_ _lubs." More work for the fourteen.

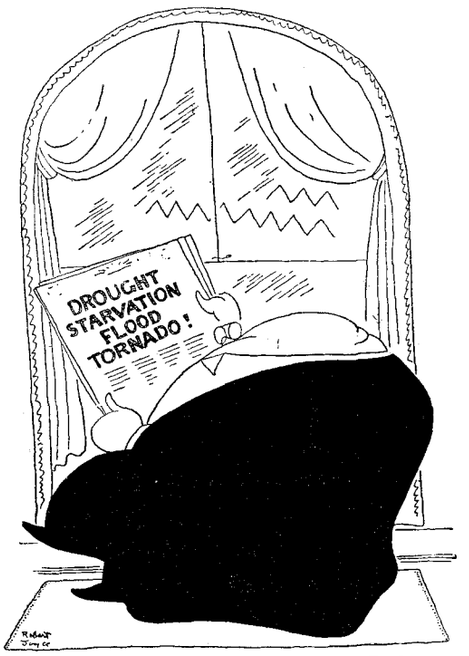
The *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences,* in its entry on prostitution, gives the answer in cautious terms.

> The economic origin of prostitution manifests itself rather in women who are close to the economic margin and who feel that the difficulty and monotony of their life can be lessened only through exploiting the sex function. This theory is supported by the fact that the number of prostitutes varies with seasonal and casual labor; in certain employments women look upon prostitution as a regular source of incidental income. Cyclical economic changes too seem to vary the volume of prostitution; it has been said that "morals fluctuate with trade." More subtle in their implications are what may be termed the social causes of prostitution (which are, in the long run, however, economically determined), "usually classified under the headings of housing, personal relations and public attitude, education and recreation. . . ."

The diagnosis given here parallels the Marxist conclusions arrived at long ago. They have led to the only scientific cure possible, in the only social system where fundamental remedies have been attempted. The article continues:

> An encouraging example of what can be done . . . is Soviet Russia with its system of prophylactoria for the social and economic as well as the physical rehabilitation of prostitutes.

Soviet history, in fact, has been a grand-scale laboratory for the study of this social disease. Immediately after the revolution the officials of the newly-established health department set out to eradicate the pest. They were making good progress when the temporary recession to a restricted capitalism under the N.E.P. brought about a simultaneous revival of prostitution. Curiously enough, with it reform also revived. There were proposals to organize a "militia of morals" to combat prostitution; the Nepmen needed the usual capitalist conscience-salve. Had it not been for the vigorous propaganda of Zetkin and others against this typical bourgeois crusade, the Soviet Union might have seen temporary Soviet counterparts of our vice societies, probably with prosperous Nepmen on the board of directors, itching to pick the sore.



R. Joyce.

"Ho-hum! An earthquake and a war and the depression will be over."

The move was stopped and with the liquidation of the N.E.P., the campaign against prostitution again made headway. The reorganization of Soviet society which destroyed the economic cause by ending unemployment and destitution and the social causes by ending sexual inequalities and archaic codes of sexual ethics, struck the evil at its sources. The health department then undertook the reclamation of the existing prostitutes. It established prophylactoria where women were admitted for cure. Medical treatments, however, were only a part of the therapy. The prophylactoria were intended to effect a complete spiritual, economic and social rehabilitation of the women. They were given an education; cultural aptitudes were encouraged and developed; trades were taught them; during their stay contact with men and other features of normal social life were provided. When they left the prophylactoria they were placed immediately in work of their own choice. Relapses were rare, the ratio of "incurables" running to between three and four percent. Compare this with the close to 100 percent relapses of "rescued" females, turned back into capitalist society.

The strong social sense developed among every element of Soviet society makes an appearance also among these women, who now have an organization of their own, Former Prostitutes, Now Workers. At their first conference in Moscow in 1931, one of the members said:

> **We must prove our mettle, we working women who have come into the productive process. For now that we have once cast ourselves among the general mass we must work in the proper spirit. . . . Why, I came off the streets, but not a single workman in the factory has ever made me feel it, and I for my part do not make a secret of it. Comrades, admit it frankly and you will be all the better treated, for people will say: She has suffered much.**

Another contributed this poem:

> By the calm moonlight
> In the month of May
> The brothel where I lay
> Was raided and I was taken that night.
> The cold prison once more,
> Witnesses, questions galore;
> Mean questions and brutal they are,
> When a prostitute stands at the bar.
> Five years in a prison cell.
> From my young life men stole;
> They took a heavy toll,
> Those years of unforgotten hell.
> But now it is past like a dream,
> I am that country's daughter now
> Where the people's will is supreme,
> And their power with the years will grow.

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Our Readers' Forum

From Our Prize Winner

After twenty-four hours I have recovered enough from my astonishment that I am able to write you.

Below are a few facts about myself which, I imagine, cover the points on which you wanted information.

I am thirty-two years old and have never been married. I attended Washington University in St. Louis, Mo., and the University of Iowa at Iowa City, and since leaving school I have worked in the freight offices and yards of several middle Western railroads. I am at present employed as a perishable-freight inspector for the Western Fruit Express Co., a railroad subsidiary which handles perishable freight service for the Great Northern Railway. I am a member of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, of the American League Against War and Fascism, and of the Friends of the Soviet Union. Since last November I have acted as secretary of the Sioux City branch of the American League Against War and Fascism.

I think THE NEW MASSES is the best magazine in America. Though I like everything in it, I like especially John Strachey, Isidor Schneider, Robert Forsythe, and the cartoons of Redfield and Gropper and Gardner Rea.

I hope that part of my thousand dollars will let me take a trip to the Soviet Union in 1937; another part will be set aside for a perpetual subscription to THE NEW MASSES.

Sioux City, Iowa. CARROLL D. H. NORLING.

"Seditious" Wilma Conners

May we call the attention of your readers to a very pathetic case of a mother, who gave her freedom that her children might have food and shelter, who spent a year and a day in a federal prison because she was ready to fight to keep her little family together, and who has lost these children.

Mrs. Wilma Conners only a few weeks ago completed a sentence of one year and one day at the Anderson, West Virginia, Federal Penitentiary for Women. She was charged with "FEDERAL SEDITION." Her "crime" was participating in a demonstration of unemployed men and women before the headquarters of the FERA in Oklahoma City. Since "F" stood for Federal, the authorities charged those arrested with "Federal Sedition" for demanding bread.

Mrs. Conners has two children—a boy of 10 and a girl of 12. Not content with vilifying this courageous woman at the trial, the Federal Judge who sentenced her to the penitentiary brought pressure to bear on local authorities while Mrs. Conners was serving her time, and presented her with the alternative of sending her children to an institution, or to California, where their father, now divorced from Mrs. Conners, lives.

Upon her return to Oklahoma, Mrs. Conners learned that her little son is very sick and that his father now demands she take the children back. She says: "This will require $65.00 to go there and back. There is no possibility of getting that much money together here. Now if I could just borrow that amount, I will find some way of paying it back with interest."

ROSE BARON, *Secretary,*
Prisoners Relief Dept., I.L.D.

Review of a Review

Although a good review of the book, H. N. Fairchild's critique of "American Philosophy Today and Tomorrow," seems to err in leaving one with the feeling that philosophy, as a serious study, is arid and useless.

It is true that traditional philosophy has been too thoroughly absorbed with the upper ethereal regions to concentrate on vital worldly issues. However, this does not mean that philosophy is meaningless, but rather, that this unwholesome and often dangerous type of philosophy should be shown up. It is certainly necessary that more and more people develop an interest in philosophy and a comprehension of the veridical philosophic method, Marxian dialectics, so that practical questions of tactics may be coupled with a clear theoretical insight.

It might also be noted that Paul Weiss's remark—"to be is to transcend"—lends itself to a dialectical interpretation; "existence" potentially contains the possibility of a dynamic reorganization of its elements to produce a more rational "existence." Propositions involving the term "transcend" are frequently interpreted as a dualism between natural and supernatural realism. Weiss's quotation need not be viewed in this way, but may be analyzed in strict materialistic fashion. (Did not Marx turn Hegel right side up?) The thoroughly Marxian principle that outworn institutions tend to nullify their negative and contradictory aspects is a concrete exemplification of this idea.

JOSEPH RAND.

Children Please Note:

A niece, 13, eager, intelligent, asks me what to read.

I pass her on to you.

How about an article on literature for children, with book lists appended?

If the job has already been done, will you make reference to it in the Forum?

I am very much impressed with your magazine.

A. MARSHAN.

[An article on literature for children by Jean Simon appeared in the December 24, 1935 issue of NEW MASSES.—THE EDITORS.]

Tacoma's Red Flag Law

The city fathers of Tacoma, Washington, fearing the swing to the left within the city, passed, March 25, 1936, Ordinance No. 11271, known as the Red Flag Ordinance. The salient features are:

"It shall be unlawful for any person . . . to display in any place or to have in his possession within the city limits of Tacoma, the red or black flag, or other emblem or device of any nature whatsoever, symbolizing the purpose to overthrow by force or violence the representative form of government. . . .

"It shall be unlawful to hold any assembly or meeting . . . where public discussions are held, unless the American flag shall be conspicuously displayed at all times . . . said flag shall not be less than thirty-six inches by forty-eight inches. . . .

"Any person violating . . . this ordinance . . . shall be punished by a fine not exceeding $300 or by imprisonment . . . not exceeding 90 days."

The ordinance designates as an assembly any group of more than two.

The enactment of this ordinance called forth such a storm of protests, demonstrations, organizations for resistance, and general feeling of resentment, that it is already a dead letter. Under its provisions, three people quietly discussing the weather on their way home from Sunday School, must continually wave the U. S. flag not less than three by four feet in size; painters and draymen must remove the danger flags from the ends of long ladders, gas-pipe and the like, thus endangering the occupants of other vehicles; and no danger flags can mark ditches and washouts. Even a picture of a red flag in the back of one's dictionary is unlawful and the police chief has the right to search all suspects and arrest citizens "at his own discretion" for possessing unlawful designs or emblems. This shows to what silly extremes fascist-minded people will go when alarmed.

Of course the ordinance was not obeyed; groups still meet and talk on the streets; and workmen still fly the red flag from the ends of gas-pipe, ladders, and telephone poles. Today I saw two workmen each placing a red flag at the end of a street excavation. When Norman Thomas was to speak in Tacoma, the sponsors notified the mayor that they would display a large red flag at the meeting; they did. The mayor was also notified that a red flag would be carried through the streets during the May Day parade and that if any arrests were made, the matter would be carried to the supreme court of the United States, if necessary, to protect our rights. No arrests were made. The city dads were bluffed out; they hadn't expected to meet with any such resistance as this.

What better way could our officials adopt to train our citizens to disrespect law in general? How more could a body of officials show their own renunciation of those cherished principles laid down in the Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights?

H. D. BAKER.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Robinson Jeffers: Poet of the Setting Sun

NO poet ever planned his life more consistently than Robinson Jeffers and few, if any, have shaped the whole of their existence so well. Nearly twenty-five years ago, the boy from Pittsburgh, whose father had crammed him with the classics, found the spot suited to his labors. It was a rocky shore at the opening of Carmel Valley, a land where brown hills and steep canyons jut into the Pacific. It became the scene of all his richly-studded narratives.

He began at once to combine physical toil with mental toil. He rolled up the granite boulders from the sea and built houses, walls, a tower. Slowly his little group of buildings has grown until it looks as enduring and ancient as anything on the Irish or Sicilian coast. Except for brief, self-contained travels, avoiding cities and people as much as possible, Robinson Jeffers has not left his chosen strip of beach. He does not even "go to the village," and avoids as the plague the intellectuals who flock to California. To fend off the encroaching tourists he planted, a few years ago, a thousand pines to the east, a forest between himself and the American continent. He faces the sea, the gulls, the setting sun.

The same deliberation has marked his writing. In the preface to the Modern Library edition of *Roan Stallion,* he tells us how, one afternoon twenty-two years ago, he considered the "moderns," the stream of Mallarmé which produced Eliot and Pound, and decided against it. He says that these men were "imitating each other, instead of imitating Shelley and Milton," as he had been doing. He grants them "originality" which he desires for himself also, but feels that their originality comes from "going farther than anyone had dared to go before." It is a race for originality.

> **I did not want to become slight and fantastic, abstract and unintelligible. I was doomed to go on imitating dead men, unless some impossible wind should blow me emotions or ideas, or a point of view, or even mere rhythms, that had not occurred to them.**

It can be said that fate "blew" Robinson Jeffers these things. Since *Tamar and Roan Stallion* was published, early in the 'twenties, a rhythm and a way of writing have existed that were not known before.

That book appeared in a world trying to heal itself in forgiveness of bitter wounds, a world in which men's thoughts were turning optimistically toward improvement for the masses, and peace seemed secure for a long time—to the superficial view. Today, when most of those mirages have vanished, when the masses have no more hope under our tight little profit system, but look toward a new scheme of things for mere survival, when men's eyes are more clearly open than ever to the poison that unceasingly works against culture and life, those early poems of Jeffers, curiously timeless as they were, can still be read with pleasure. They owe their integrity to splendid workmanship, to structure, to a close-knit symbolism and to a music that borrowed its sound of living speech from the Greeks, that utterly abandoned poeticisms in favor of unashamed actions and muscular words.

For these gifts American literature owes a great deal to Robinson Jeffers and for them Americans have given him greater homage, in the desirable sense, and a larger following than they have accorded most poets. Jeffers created a model of poetry that unliterary people could approach without fear of bafflement, with a feeling that it resembled the burning tension which to most of them is life.

But at some point in giving unstinted praise to Jeffers for his achievement, the reader's assurance falters. Paradox intrudes and questions begin to put themselves. Jeffers has had a wide following, but has he had a great influence? Thoroughly American, does he really express these states? Can his following grow with his new work? Does his audience mean intelligible communication? Has he anything to say that our time will long listen to? Jeffers started from high ground, but has he gone farther?

It is too late to discuss Jeffers' "philosophy." His famous theory of "falling in love outward," voiced by Orestes in *The Tower Beyond Tragedy,* his horror of "wasting inward upon humanity," his geological—rather his astronomical—conception of history, by which the human era is dwarfed to a trivial episode in time, have been too often critically examined to take space here. And the answers to the questions we have put need not be sought in abstract analysis, but in the texture of his latest work, the title poem of the volume called *Solstice,* published by Random House.

The poem is a variation of the Medea story, of a woman who kills her children to save them from the father. It contains all the violence of theme and treatment remembered in *Roan Stallion,* in *Cawdor,* in *Tamar,* the same scenes, "the shark-toothed waves, the white gulls beaten on the black clouds," the primitive rancho, the people of Spanish-Indian blood, Madrone Bothwell, the woman and mother who crushed the necks of horses "between her great knees." But despite passages of magnificent beauty, this story, compared to *Roan Stallion,* seems a shilling shocker. Reread *Roan Stallion* and you will marvel again at how the intellectual content fills the crude physical action with life, the beast with a god, and how the symbol strikes upward like a great light through the moment of violence. This intellectual integrity is absent in the new work. It merely says that a woman because she hates, not the man, the father alone, but human education and all the habitations of man, is willing to murder her children rather than send them to such a world. The powerful and stirring descriptions do not save the reader from the taste of horror.

Other poems in the same volume, "Sign Post," "Shine Republic," "Ave Caesar," with their reaction darkening into the black distortions that invite fascism; or "The Trap," in which the poet says,

> **Blind war, compared to this kind of life**
> **Has nobility, famine has dignity.**

do not tend to lift the feeling of dread. By "this kind of life," Jeffers is not referring to the misery of a people on the dole, but to an ideal "economy of abundance." Nor does it help us much when he says, "I am . . . really alien here; trust me not."

He is right; we shall not trust him too much, any more than we could the Orestes-Jeffers of his first book, who regarded the love of humanity as incest, and declared, "I have seen the dreams of the people and not dreamed them." A poet must have readers and as he withdraws himself from actual human sympathies and depends on the mo-

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* "Just between you and me, and leaving Mr. Spivak out of it, that bird is the best reporter in my not at all humble judgment in the whole United States at the present moment."—Burton Rascoe in *Esquire*

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mentum of reputation, his power will decline. We do not need to know where Jeffers' sympathies lay, for example, when the agricultural strikes seethed around him in the Salinas Valley. In these passages of his own, he seems eager to dispel all ambiguity and to seal himself finally outside of living movements. There are economic explanations of Jeffers. It is wise not to insist upon them too strongly in criticism, but the English tradition of poetry has always been cradled in leisure and it seems to me that Jeffers represents the last of this tradition of accidentally leisured poets. Ideal literature, if it is to survive, must become socially paid and socially responsive; and the snobbism of this century which made the artist "escape from the mob," and which Robinson Jeffers has learned too well, will be clearly seen as suicide.

But Jeffers, independent of his theories and sympathies, has, in addition to such records of passion and thought as his first book, given us lovely, elemental lyrics that will last as long as the language—some are in this latest book, such as "Gray Weather," "Return," and, except for the bad last line, "Where I?"—and his style, his invention of new quantitative measures capable alike of lofty content and plain speech, has become a heritage that will enrich the means of popular literature. In the work of such younger poets as Jesse Stuart, the first authentic voice of the American dirt farmer, it is apparent. But later poets will turn aside from the inhumanity and the negative pose. BILL MARTIN.

Salvage the Earth

THE IRON LAND, by Stanley Burnshaw. Centaur Press. Philadelphia, 1936. $2.

ONE could choose as a motto to this book of poetry the concluding lines of one of its chapters:

> The dynamos whir in the sheds of steel.
> The powerhouse of steel distributes pain.

Or one could choose the programmatic outcry:

> To salvage this earth from despair
> And make it fit for the living.

Or perhaps even a more outspoken command:

> In these hours of our slow emergent
> Dream, hear the wild voice of the brave
> Vanguard, striving with death, shouting
> *No words can save,*
> *Struggle is all our blood commands you:*
> *This war is love.*

The author selected as the framework for his book a steel mill. Even without his warning that this is "not a collection of unrelated records" but "a unit of experience," the reader is continually aware of the mill. Superficially the book consists of two elements: the mill itself, including the Emperor, his vice-emperors, his laborers and white-collar staff—and the poet's musings, visions, dreams. The former seems to be solid: all lunging overhead cranes, welding torches, infinite iron arms; millhands clutching at their tools, cutting "clean down to the heart of steel;" a dull colorless town around ditches of puddlewater; long rows of wasteland buried under ashes; and all the time—

> Wheels and gears of calibrated dullness
> Humming a brassy croon through metal lips
> Fixed in a ghastly grin that drools black oil,
> Grease, and drops of blood. . . .

The second element calls you "to lie down in the willowy wind," to "raise eyes upward upon pale cloud," to "watch birds flutter soft-weaving wings." Here "storm is a wild hill running mad with fright;" "night is a flood of dark wind moving by." Here the poet is free to exclaim—

> Would we could know
> The way men moved
> When thought was only
> A great dark love
>
> And blood lay calm
> In a depthless dream.

There seems to be a division between the two sets of poems intertwining in a single book. The mill, to use an integrated term, is given in sharp, objective images, often in the form of a narrative, often in colloquial language though seldom leaving the high plane of poetical expression. The "I"-poetry, to use another integrated term, is more subdued, subjective in imagery, changing in mood, and it is all in the nature of a seer's delicate song. The mill is iron and steel and girders and furnaces and glare and sheds and shacks and sweat-covered backs. The I-poetry is all phantom, wind, mist, gold, rain, "footsteps of children and girls," longing—plain, honest, human longing:

> When turning back to you, I wonder, moving
> Through twilight haze,
> If we must live only in meeting and parting
> The rest of our days.

Technically, the mill poetry is free verse, the I-poetry is rhymed verse of the more conventional type.

And yet the two elements are not only not as far apart as they may seem, but they are actually as one. They are born of the same mood, they are forms of expressions of the same approach to the realities of life.

Stanley Burnshaw is a lyricist. But the material which feeds a modern proletarian poet makes its own imperative demands. The situation of the working class, its role in production, its condition as an object of exploitation, the revolt that is brewing in many parts of the proletarian collective, must be given adequate poetic presentation, and that means it must live its own self-evident and convincing life as an artistic entity in the work of the poet. The poet is compelled by his very material to become objective, to approach the epic. His innermost "I" is mightily stormed by the class and therefore becomes "we," whether the I-form is retained or not.

When the poet is a narrator by inclination his task is comparatively simple. When he, as a lyricist, confines himself to singing the praise of the proletariat and the glory of the class struggle, his task is also simple, but he soon discovers, if he is self-critical, that he repeats himself, no matter how rich his variations. To escape this danger, to do justice to himself and the material, he must make his poetry *substantial.* He must draw from the never exhausted source of life itself. He must harness himself to life. His poetry must become objectivized.

Stanley Burnshaw solved the problem by endowing the mill with objectivity, solidity, even crassness, but leaving space in the book for the overtones produced in his lyrical poetic innermost by the solid, all too solid mill. His lyrical poetry is a sensitive personal accompaniment to the harsh and cruel music of the mill. The result is a unique book of verse where the fierce process of surplus production engenders in the workers rebellion "against all the murderous hierarchy" while the fierce burning craving for a life that is human turns the poet's inner eye to

> silence—
> Where the only motion is the quiet breathing
> Of dark boughs gazing on the restful ground.

The mill has all elements that produce the class struggle—but it is not that drab conglomeration of men and machines we so often find in proletarian works. Cassanod is throbbing with strength unspent. Men are no less stalwart than the steel they mould. They are "strong men now hurling pillars of steel, great-limbed jugglers, grapplers, straddling the bars, roaring, straining, cursing." They have powerful desires; reckless blood courses through their veins. Even if they are not yet articulate, even if they seem to suffer mutely, there is always present

> The blood's unvoiced rebellion brooding under
> This sorrow, this despair. . . .

The narrative is in the name of an office worker, a "pen pusher"; the author manages to make the office staff an integral part of the roaring, whirring mill with its burning pain and wordless striving to "wash from the earth this death-in-life." We see the mill at work, at rest, we see the town, we feel the collectivity of the working force, we meet with the rulers of the steel domain, and although no acts of rebellion are recorded and no moments of conscious expression of workers' will are shown, the inevitability of class clashes is apparent.

The author undertakes to show this inevitability not only from the point of view of immediate class interests—which he takes as needing no further elucidation—but from the

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point of view of the stream of life. There is the feeling of cosmic unity permeating the entire book. Blood and wind, words that are so often repeated in the poems, symbolize the unceasing process of life through the universe. Burnshaw feels man's being part of nature, he is painfully aware of the disruption of life's stream caused by the cruelty and mutilations wrought by the mill, by all the mills:

> Millions and millions of other humans crazed
> In countless other walls like these: young men
> And women beseeching gods to end the daylight
> And bring them evening. . . .

Burnshaw's I-poetry attempts to make us *feel* the harmony that is absent in the mill, "the certain force of cosmic earth," to make us *long* for a time when man will be able "to turn the work of days—an endless ode of joy" . . .

It is this longing to get out of the mill system into a system of harmony that lends unity to *The Iron Land.*

MOISSAYE J. OLGIN.

The Liberal Looks at Europe

A HISTORY OF EUROPE, by H. A. L. Fisher. Volume II, Renaissance, Reformation, Reason; Volume III, The Liberal Experiment. Houghton Mifflin Co. Each volume, $4.

REVIEWING the third and last volume of this eminent post-Victorian's history of our Western civilization, the Literary Supplement of The London Times remarks that "it is a delight to advance along the years in company with a humanist who is not on the defensive." Several paragraphs further on the anonymous reviewer, struggling in the meshes of his own liberal impartiality, shakes an admonitory finger: "The weakness of the book," he sighs, "is that it is somewhat anemic. Always moderate, always reasoned [it] has a regrettable tendency to let its opinions run to extremes. . . ."

Thus, with a fine and decorous irony, we are shown the true face of liberalism: humane, but anemic; always moderate, but rushing nervously toward any extremes that promise to save the face of things as they are; always reasoned, but hamstrung by a set of premises from which one, and only one, conclusion can ever emerge. The conclusion that one must never conclude anything that will necessitate drastic action or lead to a decisive participation in events.

Professor H.A.L. Fisher (Oxford) is, without question, one of the most elegant, suave and respectable historians of our day. In the two volumes before me the last 400 years of the European pageant—roughly from the early nationalist strivings of the sixteenth century to the "new dictatorships and old democracies" of the present—are displayed in a narrative distinguished alike for its emphasis upon the abstraction of Liberty and its sedulous avoidance of the reality of class struggle. At the beginning there is noticeable a curious contradiction in the author's treatment of the great historical forces which, through the conflict of Catholic and Protestant, inaugurated the mercantile epoch of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Frankly admitting the rise of the new "middle class" whose growing economic power—especially in France, Flanders, Germany and England—threatened the supremacy of the feudal aristocracy; conceding the "progressive" forces which, under the new commercial ideals of manufacturing, banking and the markets, were emancipating nations, promoting discovery and laying the foundations of the new bourgeois culture — Professor Fisher nevertheless consistently evades the basic *economic* issue of whose political manifestations he writes so skilfully. He has himself, in words intended as a defense of his own position, revealed the fatal weakness of his whole work:

> It would be too great a simplification of issues, [writes this historian whose own country has been for four centuries a proof to the contrary] to regard the European story as nothing but a struggle of classes, a clash of economic interests. That would be to underrate the rich and varied stuff of human nature, the distractions of statesmen and the waywardness of events.

It is indeed surprising with what passion and earnestness the liberal scholar falls back upon "human nature" in order to blink the realities of conflict; and how, to escape the hard logic of events, he dismisses them as "wayward." The full fruits of this nerveless attitude come to maturity in the third volume, which plunges at once into such "wayward" themes as "liberty, socialism, industrialism, nationalism, revolution and war."

Characteristically, Fisher emphasises the butchery and terror of the French Revolution. Shuddering at the excesses of the Jacobins (precisely as Edmund Burke had done) he cleverly insinuates a comparison between their ferocious leader, Robespierre and the Bolshevik, Lenin: thus laying the basis for his later and systematic hostility to the purposes, objectives and achievements of the Soviet Union. The French Commune he dismisses in a couple of malicious pages, rejoicing in the fact that "the gifted, flint-hearted old gentleman," Thiers, (whom Karl Marx described as "that monstrous gnome") showed "little compassion for the wild terrorists who had made a shambles of Paris." Apparently, this Oxford scholar knows well the art—so well received among liberals—of transforming history into calumny wherever he sees a worker's upraised fist.

> Marx, [we learn from this shell-shocked defender of the bourgeois faith] hated nationality with the rancour of an outcast, despised liberty with the arrogance of a despot, and throughout his life lost no opportunity of assailing the class from which he was himself sprung.

This thought, which could, and has, found ample expression in the writings of Hitler, Rosenberg and their disciples, dominates Professor Fisher's entire attitude toward post-war Europe and the problem of dictatorships. For him the Soviet Union, so far from being the product of an organized mass revolt against the ultimate enemy of all democracy, capitalism, is the outcome of the efforts of a little group of murderous fanatics, with Lenin and Trotsky at their head. That the Soviets are succeeding in their economic and political objectives is by no means to be attributed to their healthy structure, but merely to a new, peculiarly Russian quirk in the idea of dictatorship. *"Communists and Fascists alike* have given up the idea that political problems should be settled by discussion. . . . Inhumanity, bred of war and revolution, is a feature common to totalitarian tyranny *in all three forms."* The words which I have italicized—taken in connection with his consistent whitewashing of British imperialism's foreign policy—completely expose Professor Fisher's position as an apologist of all imperialism, as likewise his entire incapacity for the most elementary logical distinctions. For him "democracy" is the same bourgeois shibboleth it has been for liberals ever since Rousseau proclaimed the Utopian gospel of liberty, equality and fraternity. His three-volume History, for all its brilliant passages and occasionally shrewd interpretations of forces and men, has utterly missed the point and it will remain as just another monument to the sterility of "impartial" scholarship and to the bankruptcy of a "culture" which retreats from all struggle at a moment when only by engaging the sharpest and most unrelenting warfare against all forms of reaction may culture be preserved at all.

HAROLD WARD.

Insurance Wisdom

LIFE INSURANCE: A LEGALIZED RACKET, by Mort Gilbert and E. Albert Gilbert. Marlowe Publishing Co. $2.50.

THE Gilberts have produced a book of real professional competence. It is an invaluable guide to the buyer of life-insurance, showing him how to obtain the greatest amount of protection at minimum cost. They dispose decisively of the endowment policies, twenty-payment life contracts and, in fact, of any payments made by the policy-holder for anything except net life protection in the immediate future. Above all they help the young insurer by pointing out that there is no need to pay extra-premium costs here and now on the alleged argument that insurance would be more expensive as one gets older.

For the individual policy-holder, therefore, the Gilberts must go down as benefactors. There is no answer to their brilliant and helpful reasoning. On the book as a social

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analysis, however, our judgment cannot be quite as laudatory. It is true that insurance from the viewpoint of the buyer should be based on his proximate mortality danger, plus necessary overhead costs and nothing else. In view of the cyclical disturbances of capitalism and the fact that insurance is, after all, paid out of the investment of the life-insurance companies, the overloading of premiums has, in a social sense, been a warrant of safety. It is technically possible, of course, for insurance to be run under capitalism in the manner of the seventeenth century tontine, that is, as a pure administration of inert funds maintained as cash balances and out of which death benefits are paid in any given year, after making proper allowance in the premium cost for administrative charges. But actually no such situation confronts us. The insurance companies are nothing more nor less than the feeders of the large investment banks for their issues of bonds. That is why they are maintained. Were it not for this feature, the capitalists would gladly allow insurance to be a state function. But bonds and mortgages are their reason for existence and the vast fluctuations of earning power and rental receipts back of these investments require an enormous reserve, built precisely out of insanely overloaded premium costs. The last crisis of capitalism jeopardized even the largest companies and many of the smaller ones actually foundered. Insurance today, therefore, makes the middle classes pay in premium costs the risks of the earning power back of the investments sold to these companies by finance capital.

Each individual policy-holder should follow the Gilberts and sabotage this plunder game, but the totality of policy-holders could never do so without precipitating a crisis that would shake finance capitalism and largely cancel their own self-interest.

The working class presents a graver issue. The best chapter in the Gilberts' book is the eleventh, on Industrial Insurance. This monstrous machine has nothing whatever to do with insurance and is a fraud perpetrated on the most helpless of the workers. Its demagogic "health" and "social-service" propaganda is the most nauseating hypocrisy.

In the last chapter the Gilberts call upon policy-holders to organize for the defense of their rights, justly observing that Congressional investigations promise much and are always sidetracked before arriving at their terminus. While the idea of such organization is not wholly quixotic, the fact is that men do not easily combine as consumers, except in the purchase of daily commodities. The historic instinct of the working class tells it to unite at the point of production indicated as the field of class struggle. The historic instinct of the middle class, as its economic powers decline, tells it more and more to find its salvation within the organizations already serving the great destiny of the working class.

WILL BLAKE.

Wanted: a Marxian Book on Labor Problems

LABOR IN MODERN INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY, by Norman J. Ware. D. C. Heath & Co. $3.50.

TEXT books on labor problems commonly used in college courses have not kept pace with the progressive interests of many economics professors and students. It is unfortunate that Ware's new book, because he has won an outstanding reputation for earlier books on American labor history and because it is one of the "economics and business series" edited by Alvin Johnson, is likely to have a large circulation in colleges.

Prefacing his book as written from the standpoint of labor, Norman Ware is at least clear-cut on the issue of genuine trade unions as against company unions. He sees that the economic mechanism in the United States has failed

> **so to distribute the product of industry in good times as to maintain an equilibrium between ability to consume and capacity to produce. Trade union recognition, shorter hours, minimum wages and social insurance will not solve this problem entirely, but they will help.**

He condemns the anti-union policy of big employers and concludes that their attitude is an invitation to mass action of a revolutionary nature, "the only significant incentive of this sort now found in the United States." It is not the Communists "we" have to fear, he states, if "we" have to fear anything, but hunger, necessity and suffering. He is, of course, against any mass action of a revolutionary nature.

On the all-important questions of industrial unionism and a Farmer-Labor Party, Ware's book is directly contrary to the workers' needs and interests. The author is against industrial unionism because "experiments with 'mixed,' 'labor' or 'industrial' unionism have not been particularly successful." Indeed he thinks that "industrial unionism has everywhere broken down," and that craft unionism must continue as the basis of the American labor movement. He does not even recognize the widespread revolt against craft union divisiveness which had become a vital issue in the A.F. of L. long before his book was completed.

On the problem of forming a national Farmer-Labor Party, Ware does not seriously consider the matter as a present-day issue. He makes a decidedly inaccurate statement about an earlier movement for a national Farmer-Labor Party. In dismissing with a few words LaFollette's five million votes under the Farmer-Labor banner in 1924, Ware remarks in a footnote that "The Farmer-Labor Party of 1924 had practically no labor support"!

As a matter of record, for the first time in its history, contrary to its traditional non-partisan policy, the executive committee of the American Federation of Labor in 1924 endorsed an independent national ticket. The A.F. of L. specifically approved Senator Robert M. LaFollette for President and Senator Burton K. Wheeler for Vice-President on the ground that both "have, throughout their whole political careers, stood steadfast in defense of the rights and interests of wage-earners and farmers," and "have proffered a platform in which the economic issues of the day are met in a manner more nearly conforming to labor's proposals than any other platform." Contrary to Ware's assertion, very many of the five million votes cast for LaFollette were obviously labor votes.

Ware's book, as its name implies, is intended to present a well-rounded, comprehensive picture of labor in the United States, bringing American labor history up to date through the N.R.A. period and covering the important labor problems, including organized labor and the courts, violence in strikes, present-day labor organization, industrial paternalism, labor and the state, labor philosophies, and the "factors, social and economic, which condition labor relations at this time." Its record of labor history is in the main a good summary of events and for such important facts as the terms of the Danbury Hatters' case and of the Clayton Act it is a valuable, convenient reference book.

Ware, however, would stop the workers' movement exactly at the point where collective bargaining brings them minimum wages, shorter hours and a little social insurance. He is against any extension of workers' control beyond this point. He believes in labor's "accommodation" in order to save the present capitalist system which finds itself "in a difficult position in the modern world" where "adjustments are demanded."

Marxism is anathema to him. He repeats all the time-worn, nineteenth century attacks on Marx; asserts that Marxist economics no longer holds. In the present-day labor movement he describes A. J. Muste as "among the idealists" while "among the neurotics are some of the Communist leaders, both men and women." William Z. Foster he describes as "an opportunist, disillusioned," but still "intelligent and an able organizer."

The significant point is that with all this anti-Marxist bias, the author finds it necessary to devote so much space to a discussion of Marxism. He is forced to the conclusion that "withal, Marx remains today the most significant influence on labor thought even when that influence is chiefly negative, as in the United States." If Marxist influence in the United States were negative, would Ware have spent so much time in attempting a refutation?

GRACE HUTCHINS.

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Malraux and the Revolutionary Hero

DAYS OF WRATH, by André Malraux. Translated by Haakon M. Chevalier. With a Foreword by Waldo Frank. Random House. $1.75.

"'And if this night should be a night of destiny . . .'"
". . . may it be blessed until the coming of the dawn. . . ."

IT IS Kassner, back from the nine-days mind-shattering hell of a Nazi prison camp, safe across the border in Czecho-Slovakia, back with his wife and child. Inarticulate, incapable tonight of the old gestures of affection ("and there are no others"), he can but—

"In the cell I tried to use music to—to defend myself. For hours. It produced images, naturally, an endless stream of them—and, by chance, a sentence, a single sentence, the call of the caravaneers. . . ."

So he repeats it: "And if this night. . . ." And she, his wife, gives him the antiphone. It is the closing chord of a great novel, a short novel and a great one. With its compressed and sustained intensity, it could hardly have been much longer. For—think of a fine novel, one of the finest that you know, take it at its most intense point, take that point as your mood for the whole, begin and end on it, sustain it throughout without a let-down and you have the feat which André Malraux has accomplished here.

There can be no doubt that worthwhile writers of the world are headed in the direction of a socialist realism; but as Bukharin has pointed out, this realism is by no means of necessity anti-lyrical; a "revolutionary romanticism" is one of the elements of it. This is to be distinguished, needless to say, from a false romanticizing, particularly when applied to so tempting and so perilous a theme as revolutionary activity in Hitler's Germany. The "Exiles," with their vague allusions to "dynamitings" and similar distortions have made rather a botch of it. One cannot but feel that this is in large part due to their ignorance of what the revolutionary movement is. André Malraux happens to be a working revolutionist himself; he knows. At the same time, he is the greatest romantic writer of our era. He is engaged in the discovery of the new man, the new hero who is being forged out of the blood and fire of the proletarian struggle the world over.

This is, also, the new individual—has not Malraux elsewhere assured us that "Communism restores to the individual his inherent fertility"? Not the "Faustian man," whose end is the Storm Trooper gangster, but the individual who is being hammered out by the revolution, to become the hero of constructive socialism, where he is to find his full flowering.

There is a sense in which Malraux is creating this individual, this hero. At the Moscow Writers Congress there was talk of the "engineer of souls"; whereupon the author of *Man's Fate* arose to remind the assembled delegates that the business of an engineer is to create, to build.

Yet, the thought must come to one: is not the Malraux hero essentially a tragic figure, the last heroic off-shoot of an old and tragic line, who must die that the seeds of life may live in a rapidly dawning tomorrow? "I know that nothing will pay for what so many of us are suffering here except victories."

However this may be, in *Days of Wrath* we have the most deeply moving account, fiction or non-fiction, that we have yet had of the Hitler terror. If you lay awake nights after Billinger's *Fatherland,* you have an even more harrowing experience in store for you here. More harrowing because purveyed in its artistically concentrated essence. (It is fiction resuming its graphic empire.) Kassner's fight with madness in the presence of those blank cell walls, the inscriptions left by other prisoners, the tappings from the next cell, the thud of Storm Trooper feet in the corridor—another merciless beating? more inhuman torture? Told with the winnowed art of a Proust, applied now to a socially self-respecting, a heroic content.

Malraux, we are to remember, was one of those who led the fight for Dimitrov's freedom. He at that time had an opportunity to document himself. He has here told the story of his German comrades. It is a story best summed up by the French title, *Le Temps du Mépris,* literally, the Age of Contempt—of contempt, that is, for all humanity and human rights, a contempt or scorn that is epitomized by the Storm Trooper, but which is so much more than that: the ugly property of a dying world order which takes down to a living death so many Kassners, that a new world may be born. A world whose one pervading value shall be man, and whose purpose: life.

SAMUEL PUTNAM.

The Eighteenth Century

AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY MISCELLANY: Edited with an introduction by Louis Kronenberger. Putnam. $3.

IT is impossible for anyone with a conscience, remembering what Swift and Pope had to say about critics, to approach with any comfort a miscellany of 18th century literature, in a critic's guise. A critic in such company, runs always the risk of pulverizing himself by his own citations. Mr. Kronenberger, fortified with a gift for an apt phrase, acquits himself creditably in the introduction to this miscellany which includes, besides Swift and Pope, Sterne, Chesterfield, Gibbon, Gay, Sheridan, Walpole and Blake. One could wish however, that he had paid some attention to the relation the Industrial Revolution and the development of a "nation of shopkeepers . . . prospering handsomely" had to the development of a literary audience from this rising bourgeoisie and the accommodation of literature to the taste of this newly empowered class.

Mr. Kronenberger does well to indicate that despite Pope, Chesterfield, Gibbon and Sterne the 18th century had more to it than a stuffed shirt, a powdered wig and a dance called the minuet. It was a century of superstition, religious intolerance, political corruption such as would have made a Tammany politician sick from sheer envy, and (what Mr. Kronenberger fails to mention) a century when the English proletariat first began to taste the full flavor of systematic capitalist exploitation under the newly developed factory system. One cannot help feeling that a masterpiece of political pamphleteering such as Swift's Drapier's Letters (which actually did prevent Wood's halfpence from even reaching Ireland) or the brilliant and bitter Modest Proposal (unfortunately omitted in this collection) were closer to the tenor of 18th century life than the mincing system of etiquette which the Earl of Chesterfield rammed down his son's throat. Likewise one cannot help feeling that the savage and simple rejection of such an age in Blake's Songs of Experience involved more courageous and honest effort than, for all its charm, Sterne's trifling satire on and smug acceptance of it in the Sentimental Journey.

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The Screen

"We Are from Kronstadt"

NO other recent Soviet film has the physical sweep and impact of *We Are from Kronstadt* (Cameo). It has just those qualities in which the American western and gangster films developed most proficiency—excitement, visual stimulation. Yet these qualities remain essentially superficial and formal aspects of the creative cinema. Even *All Quiet on the Western Front,* which concentrates on the horrors of war and the sweep of the battle scenes, fails to become a vital drama; its message—propaganda, if you will—is impeded by the ideological limitations of the creator or by censorship.

These limitations do not inhibit the director or the scenarist of *We Are from Kronstadt.* Its realism is both terrifying and stirring. Its theme is simple: revolutionary workers defending the new-born Workers' State against the invading White Guards. A group of sailors from the naval base at Kronstadt meet the Yudenich army which outnumbers them and fight a heroic and at first a losing battle. Reinforcements arrive. The battle scenes on the whole are so amazing in their intensity that it is difficult to believe they were acted, that they were not filmed during the course of the struggle.

There are other extraordinary sequences: most extraordinary of all—and one of the most dramatic in the history of cinema—is the execution of the Red sailors. The captured men stand at the edge of a steep sea cliff. Round each sailor's neck is tied a heavy stone. One by one they are pushed over the cliff into the water far below, while overhead the gulls wheel back and forth. Without sentimentality, almost without comment, the horror and the tragedy and the heroism of men dying in defense of their homeland (and it is truly their homeland) enfolds. There is a passage in which the lone soldier creeps up to the oncoming tank and shatters it with a single grenade; there is the grotesquely comic scene in which the progress of the battle is followed for the most part through the action of a White soldier captured by the Reds, who sits in the trench and indicates the ebb and flow of the fight as he rips off or replaces his epaulets.

But, on the whole, *Kronstadt* remains essentially uncinematic. It consists of large sections of action separated by lengthy subtitles which fill the gaps not shown on the screen. It is as if the camera was unable to avoid the limitations of both space and time. Consequently, the film is composed like a book (divided into chapters) or like a play (separated into acts). In addition, the musical score lacks imagination; several of the battle scenes are either too long and so poorly edited that they become anti-climactic.

The film was made essentially for a Soviet audience. Presupposing a knowledge of the political situation at the time when the White Guards threatened Petrograd, it takes for granted that the audience is acquainted with the geographical relationship of Kronstadt to Petrograd, that the fall of Petrograd threatened the very life of the Revolution. American audiences obviously are not any too familiar with Soviet history of 1919-1920, hence the full significance of the film can easily be lost. More experienced Soviet directors fashion their films so that the result has international appeal. Their films are not merely accurate histories; they are interpretations of the struggles of workers, the oppressed, for freedom, for the right to forge their own state. Kronstadt fails because its treatment lacks this universality.

For example, while the problem of collectivization is primarily a Soviet problem, *Peasants* retranslated the conflict into a warm, vital, intimate film that presented the subject in such a way that even a foreign audience, an American audience, participated in it fully. *Chapayev* which, like *Kronstadt,* deals with the Civil War, had a warmth and humor that gave it an international quality. Zigan and Vishnevsky did not solve this problem of universal appeal in *Kronstadt.*

Vishnevsky has attempted to give a composite picture of the rank and file Bolshevik soldier and sailor. He has drawn from the unidentified mass, types endowed with intimate details and characterizations — the happy-go-lucky sailor who refused to part with his guitar even when thrown to his death from the cliff; the supreme individualist, antagonistic to the political commissar and the Communist Party, who is finally won over; the cold-blooded and scientific army commander; the political commissar sent by the Party to direct the defense of Petrograd. For the most part, these various people perform their individual actions—some of which make you like them or hate them momentarily—without correlating them into the main flow of the film. Thus, the collective hero is not *typical of the mass*; it is merely a composite of *types.*

Friedrich Wolff has called *Kronstadt* "the real brother of *Potemkin.*" With this I cannot agree. In the Eisenstein film, the *mass* is the hero, but in the new film an attempt is made to draw individuals from that mass. But if the scenarist and director have not been entirely successful with their new collective hero, they have at least made clear what it is that makes the Red Army and the Navy different from any other in the world today.

In the final analysis, *We Are from Kronstadt* has vitality and importance. Moreover, it has political significance. The last line has a solemn, prophetic ring: "Who else wants Petrograd?" demands a Bolshevik sailor. It is a warning to the enemies of socialism; it is a vow to sacrifice everything to defend the new, the vital.

The farther the art form of the cinema progresses, the more complex become the problems of form. Markov in his little volume *Soviet Theater* (Putnam) writes: "The theater (and this applies to the cinema as well) can no longer remain a place for memories. It is an instrument for the investigation of the new social relations produced by the new conditions in a country that is building up socialism."

PETER ELLIS.

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The Theater

W.P.A. as Historian, Reporter and Dancer

IF the second series of W.P.A. plays lacks the glow of excitement which haloed the first, it is hardly the fault of the authors. Once any American creative artist has had an initial success, his second effort, no matter how fine, is almost sure to be bemoaned as a let-down. And something of this preconditioned unsanguinity has carried over to the current Federal Theater plays. But there is no intrinsic reason for slackened audience-interest. *Battle Hymn, The Dance of Death,* and the revue *1935* are all unquestionably worth seeing, though their individual theater-virtues sharply vary. However far they may be from the regions of immortal drama, the playwrights have approached their subjects with uncommon earnestness and intelligence.

All three plays bear the signature of immediacy and this is even more true of the historical play *Battle Hymn* than of The Living Newspaper's review of *1935*. It is the difference between a static and a dynamic approach to material; indeed the net result of *1935* (Biltmore Theater) should register once and for all that mere contiguity of events within a given calendar interval is no real reason for tying them together into a play. Not that *1935* is offered as a play in the ordinary sense; on the contrary, it is a review built up through newspaper research and dramatic experiment into a composite American history for the year 1935. But even such a loose structure needs some binding conception; and the lack of it causes The Living Newspaper's efforts to sprawl from the opening New Year's Eve celebration to its final repetition as the curtain. "Big news" such as the Hauptmann trial, Barbara Hutton's wedding and the death of Dutch Schultz had to be included according to the basic idea. But their presence alongside events of infinitely profounder concern called for a far different emphasis from that which The Living Newspaper provided. As they appear, such incidents as the Angelo Herndon case, the life and death of Huey Long and the Nazi Olympics controversy lose their relative significance, blur in a mass of undifferentiated highlights. Possibly it was hoped that the very juxtaposition of the sensational against the significant would register an attitude through contrast; possibly it did, for a few people. But nobody could fail to miss the penetrating single-mindedness which made of *Triple A Plowed Under* the most satisfying dramatization of the farmer's plight ever given. Some of the scenes of *1935* are excellent theater, imaginative, vibrant in the manner of *Triple A Plowed Under*. The rest, for all of its experimental interest, proves the need for a critical point of view in any attempt at recording history.

Michael Gold and Michael Blankfort have evidently realized this, for their script as now produced at the Experimental Theater differs from the one I read last year. Then it was a three-act play, strictly devoted to the career of John Brown; now each act is prefaced with a prolog, the final act followed by an epilog. A fresh contrast heightens the effectiveness of the acts and places the prologs in their logical relation: swift, compact "expressionistic" marginalia. Written from material in the Congressional Globe and the records of the period, they sharply underscore the correspondence between political questions of the 1850s-1860s and today, but without pointing a pedagogical finger or stretching facts where the analogy would snap.

Battle Hymn tells the story of John Brown's stark struggle against slavery from the year 1854 when he ran slaves north from Ohio. We hear the pleas of Brown's sons that they move toward Kansas and struggle alongside the free-staters; we witness the death of two of them at the hands of their enemies; Brown's gradual departure from his faith in a God of peace; his growth into an active abolitionist; and the doomed attack on the arsenal at Harper's Ferry, Brown's attempt to build a slave republic. It is the story of a wild, tragic hero, a story that can be made into a drama of profound poetry and passion by penetrating the burning spirit of John Brown, sounding his mind and heart. The authors of *Battle Hymn* have not attempted a work of this kind. Building upon the framework of events, they have raised up an externalized architecture of the man; instead of the passion there is an abundance of warmth and color. It is a moving play, sympathetically staged by Vincent Sherman, with fresh sets by Howard Bay and a compelling lead performance by Grover Burgess. Vast improvements could be made by speeding the tempo and generous cutting. But a number of passages appeared perfect, even under the handicaps of a first-night performance, among them the epilog, like the plagal ending in a piece of music, a mood of prolonged somberness resolved by a burst of sunlight. Some people, conscious that the life of John Brown is epic material, will be impatient with anything less than great drama. They may miss the larger implications of the present play: emphasis on the need for exploring the American historical tradition, a persuasive suggestion of vast unmined material awaiting the future of the drama.

The method of poetry, which *Battle Hymn* eschewed, has been wholeheartedly adopted by W. H. Auden in *The Dance of Death* (Adelphi Theater). However annoying may be the tri-partite insularity of Auden, Spender and Lewis, there can be no doubt of their individual brilliance among the poets of the Left. *The Dance of Death,* unfortunately, is a poor example. It shows Auden incapable of sustaining a conception

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[*A letter picked at random from our files showing again that The New Masses is an active force in the lives of its readers.*]

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with effective clarity. Outside of the initial clue—"a picture of the decline of a class, of how its members dream of a new life, but secretly desire the old, for there is death inside them"—it asks the audience to provide the transitions. As a whole, the script lacks theater-impact and the verse is a good deal less than brilliant (an interpolation by Alfred Kreymborg, "Bourgeois Blues," was the best received passage of all). Primarily a pageant of moods coordinated through the central-symbol dancer, the success of Auden's script chiefly depends on the imagination and material resources of the producer.

The demands are numerous and exacting: skilled dancers, singers, trained choruses, an orchestra, mobile sets. Emile Beliveau had to start at bottom in training the unemployed theater workers for what has proved to be artistically the most ambitious of the W.P.A. productions. How well he has succeeded it would be impossible to say unless one had been present at the start. Certainly Barry Mahool, as the dancer, achieves much less than could be desired, for the simple reason that he is professionally an actor and not a dancer. But he was the best available in the project. And the same might be said of the choruses, who in respect of enunciating verse, faced an almost insuperable difficulty.

On the other hand, Beliveau's sets could hardly have been better, Clair Leonard's music was brilliant and delightful and the production vastly enhances Auden's text. The direction did wonders toward solving a problem which would have been contemptuously scorned by the commercial producer, not only because of its esthetic principle of uniting poetry, music and dance but because of its unmistakable anti-bourgeois feeling. Auden shows the decay of a class by exposing its attempts at all sorts of escapes—fascism, mysticism, nationalism, sport, nature, nightclubs—only to be covered by the approaching shadow of Karl Marx, whose arrival brings their death. So unmistakable a political pageant was bound to irritate the bourgeois press, but it is surprising to see some of its critics indict their own adultness by indulging in elaborately puerile malice. The inevitable production-handicaps of W.P.A. theaters are hardly a reason for accepting nothing less than perfection in every case . . . for audiences as well as critics. Such irrelevant standards of perfectionism could easily deal a paralyzing blow to the developing drama. STANLEY BURNSHAW.

COMING EVENTS
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MAY 29—"Battle Hymn," a stirring play about John Brown of Harpers Ferry, by M. Gold and M. Blankfort, presented by Federal Theatre Project, Experimental Theatre, 63rd St., East of B'way. Friday, May 29. Tickets at Workers and Peoples Bookshops are: 25c, 40c and 55c.

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Between Ourselves

WITH this issue we continue the series of four articles by Ilya Ehrenbourg on "Spain in Revolt," which began in THE NEW MASSES of May 29. The third and fourth articles will appear shortly. To those who have been reading THE NEW MASSES regularly, Ehrenbourg needs no introduction. His previous contributions were received with enormous enthusiasm, particularly "Civil War in Austria," (May 19, 1934) and "Now They Are Madmen." (March 14, 1934). The present series was sent to us from Spain where Ehrenbourg has spent considerable time in his capacity as foreign correspondent of Izvestia. He is the author of several novels (translated into English) as well as an untranslated book on Spain.

Joseph Brodsky, who recently returned from Brazil, will speak on "The People's Front in Brazil" at the June 10 meeting of the Friends of THE NEW MASSES. The meeting will be held in Steinway Hall, 113 West 57 Street, New York, at 8:30 p. m. Everyone interested in the work of the Friends of THE NEW MASSES is invited.

The six poems accompanying Michael Gold's article, "Memorial Day, 1936," in this issue are reprinted from a recent anthology edited by Frederick Ziv, *The Valiant Muse* and published by G. P. Putnam's. Due acknowledgment is made to Viking Press for Wilfred Owen's poem, to the Macmillan Company for Charles Hamilton Sorley's poem, and to Harriet Monroe, editor of Poetry, for Isaac Rosenberg's "Marching."

New Writers, a magazine recently reviewed in our book section, asks that we make known the address of its editorial offices for the information of those who may wish to contribute—8200 Hamilton Avenue, Detroit, Michigan.

Joshua Kunitz, our Moscow correspondent now visiting the United States, delivered his address on the controversy surrounding Shostakovich's music at "A Party and a Talk" given under our auspices on the evening of May 27, in New York City. The substance of Kunitz's address is contained in an article which will be published shortly.

Among the writers in this issue: Moissaye J. Olgin, editor of The Freiheit, has contributed reviews and articles to THE NEW MASSES; Porter Niles is a journalist who lives in Washington, D. C.; Will Blake, an economist whose discussion of social credit appeared last week; John Buchanan, reporter and short-story writer.

Joseph Freeman will speak for the Newark Friends of THE NEW MASSES on Thursday, June 4. *Time*: 8:30 p.m. *Place*: Y.M.H.A., High and Kinney Streets, Newark.

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